

THE URBAN BLACK CHURCH'S ROLE IN COMMUNITY  
MENTAL HEALTH CARE

A Professional Project  
Presented to the Faculty of the  
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Anthony F. Lloyd  
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Anthony F. Lloyd

*This professional project, completed by*

Anthony F. Lloyd

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty  
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

*Faculty Committee*

Cornelia R. Rogers

Sam D. Rhodes

Howard Chiselli

April 4, 1985  
Date

Joseph C. Hough  
Dean

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## ABSTRACT

This Doctoral Project examines how black people have expressed mental health in the communal context. Their pilgrimage, which includes Africa and America, is an exciting testimony of the will of these individuals to discover and express various social, political and religious means of coping with mental illness and stress-related problems which originated from living in a racist and hostile environment.

The urban scene is of particular importance to the social development of black people in the community. Discrimination, disenfranchisement, political empowerment and advanced technology are crucial realities in the shaping of attitudes, goals and life styles of black America. Analysis of specific class distinctions among black people reveals impressions of cooperation and resistance inherent in the community.

The Black church has a unique role in community mental health as it relates to congregation and urban city life. While there are many works and studies on the theology, preaching, music and social activism of the black religious experience, few deal with pastoral care, mental health and mental illness. This study gathers pertinent data in the area of community mental health which is crucial to the Black church's ministry of the 1980s.

Black people's religious personalities are expressed historically and contemporarily showing the ways they have enhanced and/or negatively influenced community life.

The study is validated by a discussion on a three year Mental Health Training Program for Inner City Ministers of the School of Social Work at University of Southern California and the El Nido Family Counseling Center in Los Angeles. This program (1981 to 1983) involved fifty black ministers who participated in the Training and Counseling components. These ministers gave valuable credence to the prevailing social need of the religious community to seriously deal with the ever increasing problems which are related to stress and mental illness in the urban setting.

Four church-related programs are presented in concert with the results of the University of Southern California Ministerial Training Program, in order to establish some major features involved in a proposed Educational/Training Model of community mental health care.

## INTRODUCTION

On February 25, 1984, the writer read an arresting story in the Los Angeles Times which focused on a sniper, who on Friday, afternoon, February 24, indiscriminately shot several bullets which wounded eleven children and two adults and killed one girl on a crowded playground of a South Central Elementary school as classes were being let out.<sup>1</sup> The circumstances surrounding this tragic incident laid the foundation of this study which shows the crucial role of the urban church in the area of community mental health care.

The writer is acquainted with the 49th Elementary school which was under attack by a gunman on that fateful day, as well as the supportive groups that eventually came to the forefront to assist the victims and parents as the days unfolded. As with most unfortunate experiences, the school and community were taken off guard.

As a way of grasping the severity and seriousness of this incident, the following points will be examined: a brief profile of the sniper, Tyrone Mitchell: the fatal victim, Shala Eubanks, the church where her funeral was

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<sup>1</sup>Jerry Belcher, "Sniper Fire Kills 1, Injures 13 at School", Los Angeles Times (February 25, 1984) Section 1, p. 1.

held: the pastor of the church; and the connection of Central City Community Mental Health Care in this context. This course of examination will dramatize the magnitude of the problem which this study is designed to discuss.

The gunman took his own life approximately three and a half hours after he began shooting at individuals at the elementary school and the Los Angeles police officers and SWAT team. The newspaper article stated that "shortly before 6:00 p.m., the SWAT team stormed the house, 730 East 50th Street, where the gunman was located and discovered the man had killed himself some time earlier."<sup>2</sup> It was learned that the deceased was a twenty-eight year old black man named, Tyrone Mitchell. Immediately, after he was found, the authorities began the task of piecing together a rationale for his violent outburst which brought horror and sadness to the South Central Community of Los Angeles.

Tyrone Mitchell was a young man who grew up in the community. Specific traumatic experiences starting in his early twenties seemed to set in motion his inner turmoil and pain that eventually led him to February 24. Ironically, Tyrone was a victim of a great personal tragedy in which "the communal mass suicide" occurrence in Jonestown, Guyana, claimed his mother, father, several sisters and a brother

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Ibid.

in November, 1978.<sup>3</sup> He would have been included with the rest of the 913 cult members who died if he did not see a dentist in Jonestown, Guyana on the day of the suicides.<sup>4</sup> Hence, he saw a religious and social dream of community and equality evaporated into a nightmarish reality of death, lostness and guilt.

Further investigation revealed that he was unable to properly put his life back together on returning to Los Angeles. Although he lived in the house of his parents, he could not find peace and happiness. His difficulty at that time was brought to light by two individuals, his fiancée, Marylou Hill and his attorney, Marcus Topel, who represented him during the legal procedures following the Jonestown tragedy.

Marylou Hill, 29, said that "he suffered a 'nervous breakdown' as a result of what had happened in Jonestown."<sup>5</sup> A more descriptive version of Tyrone's mental condition was given by attorney Topel, who stated that "he was severely affected by the loss of his family...he'd gone down there an idealistic young man looking for Utopia, and instead he

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<sup>3</sup> Eric Madnic, "Sniper Escaped Jonestown But Not its Horrors," Los Angeles Times (February 25, 1984), section 1, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Belcher, p.1,26.

<sup>5</sup> Madnic, p. 26.



ended up with unremitting bleakness...he was an affable, well mannered and soft-spoken young man who had an extremely tough time adjusting to his family loss.<sup>6</sup>

Tyrone had minor run-ins with the Police Department a few years before the fatal shooting. The Newton Police Division in South Central Los Angeles knew of him through his use of PCP and other drugs, disputes with his uncle and cousins and periodic incidences of shooting in the air when he was home.<sup>7</sup> The neighborhood residents were acquainted with his irrational behavior and they characterized him as being a disturbed and confused young man. Unfortunately no police, nor surviving relatives could persuade him to seek professional care. Hence his inability to come to grips with himself, finally engulfed others on February 24, in a period of suffering, anguish and fear. One of the victims was Shala Eubank whose life was tragically cut short.

Shawn Williams, who is also a 10 years old student at the school, described how Shala tried to escape the sniper bullets. He states that "Shala was by the stairs and when the shooting began she started running for cover, unfortunately she was cut down."<sup>8</sup> Another eyewitness, Albert Jones, 50 a schoolyard supervisor, who was slightly wounded

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6 Ibid. 7 Ibid.

8 Belcher, p. 26.

by the sniper, tried in vain to assist Shala as she laid face down and bleeding on the playground.<sup>9</sup> The untimely death of Shala introduced an interesting connection between the writer and her.

The writer was saddened by the entire incident on the school playground, but from this situation, he discovered that Shala was a member of Roger William Baptist Church in Los Angeles. This particular church has played a significant role in the writer's life. Many of the members knew him since his childhood. His deceased grandmother was the President of the First Aid Board of the Church for approximately thirty years, and his deceased aunt was a member of the Usher Board for years. On several occasions he had preached at the church. In addition, the pastor, Dr. Murphy C. Williams<sup>10</sup> and the writer have known each other for six years. Thus it was a natural desire of the writer's part to investigate Shala's relation with the Church, as well as the Church's response to her death. Therefore, the next few days the writer read the newspaper and listened to the television for ongoing news which pertained to the 49th

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Dr. M. C. Williams earned his B.A. degree from Bishop College and Master degree in Social Work at the University of Nebraska; prior to coming to Roger Williams Baptist Church in 1977, he was pastor of an influential Baptist church for many years in Denver, Colorado.

street Elementary School.

On March 8, 1984, the Los Angeles Sentinel, the largest Black controlled newspaper in Southern California, featured an extensive article and pictures of the funeral service of Shala Eubank on February 29, at Roger William Baptist Church. There were over 1,000 people who crowded into the church and stood outside during the funeral service.<sup>11</sup> Inside the Church, the choir, program speakers and pastors M. C. Williams endeavored to comfort the bereaved family, classmates, teachers, administrative staff of the elementary school and many community residents who were in attendance. The funeral service was designed to instill consolation and meaning for those present surrounding the senseless departure of Shala. In this situation, the Church was forced to deal with the consequence of a Mental Health System in Los Angeles which failed to reach, a deeply disturbed and guilt-ridden young man.<sup>12</sup>

Approximately two weeks after Shala's funeral, the writer interviewed Pastor M. C. Williams concerning his reflections on the deceased, the role of the church and the ramifications of mental health problems which exist in the

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<sup>11</sup>"Shala Eubank's Funeral", Los Angeles Sentinel (March 8, 1984) section 1, p. A-5.

<sup>12</sup>Sandy Banks, "How The System Fails to Catch the troubled", Los Angeles Times (March 13, 1984), section 1, p. 1.

community. It was apparent during the initial minutes of our interview that Pastor Williams would share genuine opinions regarding the above subject matter. He did not give any indication of holding back or trying to give simple answers to hard and complex questions surrounding the death of a young member.<sup>13</sup>

Pastor Williams shared that Shala was greatly influenced by her great grandmother who is an active member of the Church. Shala loved and respected her and from this relationship she officially joined the church approximately ten months before her death. After she was baptized and received the right hand of fellowship from the other members during an evening service, she became a regular worshiper on Sunday morning service. He added that the grandmother periodically attended the church before Shala's death, but, since her funeral, she plans to attend more regularly. Pastor Williams and the writer think that the grandmother is somewhat motivated by personal guilt and remorse, and her new commitment to religious worship and practice will truly be tested as time goes on. Pastor Williams plans to encourage her whenever she feels spiritually weak or social disinterested in communal fellowship.

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Personal interview with Pastor M. C. Williams at his home on March 13, 1984. Los Angeles, Time 12:00 noon to 2:30 p.m.

His facial expression seemed to reflect sadness when he spoke about her parents. The mother was not a member of the Church and she has a history of drug use. In the case of the father, the scene does not brighten. He is also involved in drug use. Their mutual problems with drug abuse was a contributing factor of them only providing a low-income environment for Shala. Just because a person live in a low-income situation does not automatically result in low self-esteem or anti social behavior. All indications are that Shala was a nice and friendly girl. Nevertheless, there is a strong possibility that she did experiences some negative pressures within a home setting where illegal drugs use was practiced by her parents. The presence of drugs does cause bickering and disharmony within a family context.

Pastor Williams felt that her parents needed professional assistance in the areas of drug counseling and vocational guidance, and a few occasions in which he talked with them convinced him of their disinterest in the church and religion. But they did express deep pain and sorrow at their daughter's funeral. He has let them know of his openness to share with them whenever the need arose.

The writer proceeded to introduce the next subject, "the role of the Church during a tragedy". Pastor Williams was quick to mention the importance of the "extended family concept" of the church, especially the black church.

Historically, the black church reached out to many people who were suffering and in need of material and spiritual comfort. Roger William Baptist Church has specific caring groups and members who automatically responded when a crisis has occurred.<sup>14</sup> In the case of Shala, members visited her family prior to the funeral and they came with food and words of comfort and support. On the day of the funeral, the Church's children choir sang as the service and a number of members were presented to show support for the bereaved family and others. Pastor Williams interpreted the eulogy in an effort of healing and consoling those in attendance.

He based the church's action in regard to a "Personalized Theology." He characterized the power of this theology in the following manner:

People have a faith in a personal God. They have experienced His power and they know Him as a friend and a Healer. This unique relationship with God is the theological underpinning which motivates people to reach out and help others in need. <sup>15</sup>

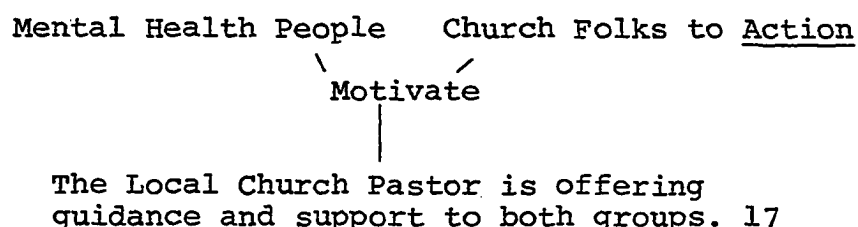
From this point, Pastor Williams perceived to comment on the Mental Health issue which is apparent in Shala's situation. He recognized that the Black Church's "Personalized Theology" does not free it from the harsh realities of violence, corruption, abuses, depression, and other conditions which are inherent in the human experience.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.      <sup>15</sup>Ibid.

He stated that "certain phrases as, 'Let God do it!' 'God's grace is sufficient!', sometimes allow the church to isolate itself from acute social problems in the community."<sup>16</sup> The writer could see that Pastor Williams had deep feelings concerning his members seeing the value of developing lay ministers which will strengthen the family unit in the church and community. He believed that the family is the key to a strong church ministry in the urban setting.

He gave an interesting diagram which shows that the Mental Health Christian Professionals will have to support the community minded pastor, as well as initiate programs and service models which can be part of the over-all structure of the Local Church:



Pastor Williams concluded our interview with this statement, "the Church Tradition reflects the importance of good personal relationships: vertically and horizontally and this is also true for solving many mental health problems in the community."<sup>18</sup> The ways in which the church can successfully incorporate within its ministry the mental health issue is the challenge and problem in which this study is attempting to address.

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid. <sup>17</sup>Ibid. <sup>18</sup>Ibid.

The significance of what has been said is further seen by briefly observing the connection of Central City Community Mental Health Center is South Central, Los Angeles with the 49th Street Elementary School. The part will be discussed in the following manner, 1) the writer's involvement with Central City Community Mental Health Center, 2) a glimpse at the past, and finally the February 27, 1981, Survey of Local Schools by Verna Schmidt, Resource Developer at the Agency.

Central City is located approximately one mile from the school. The writer has not been on the grounds of the school but he has been affiliated with Central City as a professional staff member. For seventeen months which encompassed 1981-82, the writer functioned as the Director of Volunteer Services at the Agency. As the Director, he had to become thoroughly knowledgeable of its services and programs which pertained to Mental Health issues, problems and care of the community. This agency, at the time, the writer was on staff, was recognized as the largest and oldest black controlled Community Mental Health Center in the United States. The agency reached an employment capacity of four hundred persons who held numerous professional, paraprofessional and maintenance positions and fully operated fifteen clinical, consultative, educational and counseling programs in the south central and central areas of Los Angeles. The writer was extremely proud to be



a member of such a valuable agency at that time.

The 1981 Annual report of the agency substantiated its value by tracing the rapid clientele growth that has taken place since 1961. In that year, the agency began in the basement of a Black Church-the Church of Christian Fellowship-in which time the founder, Dr. J. Alfred Cannon, a black psychiatrist, and a few of his colleagues and friends volunteered their time to render crucial clinical services to residents in an improvised area who desperately needed guidance and assistance. The progress of Central City is staggering, "from a single client in 1961 to over 8,000 in 1980-81: 4,000 mentally disabled, substance abusers (alcohol and drugs), family planners; 4,584 developmentally disabled." <sup>19</sup>

When the 49th Elementary School incident occurred, the writer remembered an insightful February 27, 1981 report by Ms. Verna Schmidt, the Resource Developer at Central City. She conducted a series of site visits to twenty-one elementary schools, seven Junior high schools and four high schools in the catchment area. The purpose of her survey was to investigate the psychological services of these schools and assess the role of Central City as a Community Mental Health provider.

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Central City Community Mental Health Center,  
Annual Report (1961-1981 Highlights and Accomplishments),  
August, 1981.

Among her researched elementary schools was 49th Street. She indicated that the school employed two part-time psychologists who did most of the testing, counseling and special classes (under Master Plan).<sup>20</sup> Children, who had severe emotional problems or found themselves embroiled in a seemingly inescapable crises web, were referred to Central City and Kedren Community Mental Health Center for evaluation, treatment and sometimes hospitalization.

Approximately three months after her report, the writer began working at Central City. While he was at the agency, he observed the value of the clinical services such as hospitalization, individual and group counseling, family counseling and educational training, on troubled children. Although the writer was not privileged to know the number of children from 49th Street school who was exposed to Central City's various services, he is confident that the very presence of the agency was a source of clinical and preventive care for them.

Three years later when the sniper struck a deadly blow at the school, the administration and staff did not have to search very far for professional assistance. The connection with Central City Community Mental Health Center was already established and its services were invaluable in

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Ms. Verna Schmidt, "Report of Schools In the Catchment Area," Central City Community Mental Health Center, February 27, 1981.

assisting the victims and relatives during the initial days following the attack.

The seemingly ease in which the 49th Street school brought the gathering of supportive resources, do not dismiss the need of a greater partnership among caring institutions in the community. There are some neighborhood and regional alliances and group coalitions which meet weekly or monthly to discuss, strategy and act on community issues. Nevertheless, these efforts only marginally deal with the ever growing pressures of urban life.

Concurrently, the black church in the urban setting lacks a comprehensive and operational plan of prevention, education and treatment in conjunction with other resources in the community for the numerous social and emotional problems experienced by individuals and families. This is a bold pronouncement to make in regard to the black church, since notable scholars have thoroughly documented the significance of religion of individuals who lived in pressured situations. This study is attempting to examine the area of community mental health care which presents a challenge for the Christian Church, especially the Black Church in the 1980s.

The issue of Mental Health is becoming an increased social concern. The scope of the issue will illuminate the value of the study.

### The Value of The Study

Recently, two national reports have been published which dramatically portrayed the mental health issue of American society. In the Los Angeles Times the American Psychiatric Association concluded its year long study on the state of mental illness with some valuable insights. The Association brought out the deplorable conditions in which the homeless mental ill find themselves. The study stated that "the homeless live and move about as untouchables in their communities."<sup>21</sup>

It is bad enough being homeless but when a person also suffers some form of mental disability, then he or she is almost in a NO WIN circumstance in terms of receiving adequate care from designated resources in the society. The numbers bear out the high percentage of mental illness among the homeless: "the serious and chronic mental illness affect 25% to 50% of the nation's estimated 250,000 to 2 million homeless persons."<sup>22</sup> The President of the American Psychiatric Association, Dr. John A. Talbott, candidly showed that significant role of government in providing necessities for the troubled, "you can't begin with mental

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<sup>21</sup>Miles Harvey, "Food, Clothing, Shelter Urged For Mentally Ill", Los Angeles Times, (September 13, 1984), section 1, p.5.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

health services when what the people really need is a hot meal, shelter and clothing."<sup>23</sup>

This study on the homeless and mental illness does not embody the total picture of the mental health in this country. The second national report appeared in Time, which focuses on a six year survey by the National Institute of Mental Health at a cost of 15 million, presents a wider perspective of mental health for our consideration. The study shows that one in five has a disorder. In addition, the study developed an important chart <sup>24</sup> which highlights the major diseases contracted by the troubled minds:

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Number Affected</u>	<u>% of U.S. Adults Affected</u>	<u>% who are Treated</u>
Anxiety	13.1 million	8.3%	23%
Alcohol & Drug Abuse	10.0 million	6.4%	18%
Depression	9.4 million	6.0%	32%
Schizophrenia	1.5 million	1.0%	53%

The study clearly brought out that mental health problems are prevalent on the American scene. The racial composition was not discussed in this particular study. However, the broad scope of these various diseases does re-

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "Poling for Mental Health", Time 129:16 (October 15, 1984) p.80.

present more than one ethnic group. In other words, each ethnic group has its share of these-related problems. The survey does present some insightful views as to certain characteristics among women and men:

It found that women tend to suffer from phobias and depression, while men score significantly higher than women in the abuse of alcohol or dependence on drugs and in long-term antisocial behavior. When all disorders are taken into account, men and women are about equally troubled. Earlier surveys showed that women were more psychiatrically disabled and had more symptoms than men, possibly because women tend to seek help for depression and men tend to hide theirs with alcohol. The current survey found that women seek professional help twice as frequently as men. 25

From the above material we are aware that the issue of mental health is not found to one social group or class of people, rather the society at large must provide support and care for citizens whose lives are shattered and brokened.

The two reports showed the national scope of the mental illness reality. This does not preclude the local level emphasis on the troubled minds of society. Two expressions come to the writer's mind: the Los Angeles Times article, "How System Falls to Catch The Troubled" of February 13, 1984, and the television, 6:00 p.m. Eye-witness News on Channel 7, which devoted a week long series (May 21 to 25, 1984), on the mental health problems in Los Angeles reported by Ms. Terry Murphy, gave a comprehensive look at the growing mental health issue which

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

can not be ignored by the general public.

The newspaper article and the television, Channel 7, Eyewitness News were penetrating and concise in interpreting the limitations of the mental health delivery service system to adequately treat and rehabilitate the enormous numbers of victims of mental illness and stress-related problems. The Los Angeles community can not effectively combat mental illness with fragmented services and band aid approaches. A broad utilization of resources among all of the ethnic communities is needed. This type of uniform communal effort is a monumental task, which will require cooperation from civic, political and religious leaders.

The role of the clergy is of paramount importance in this study. The clergy has the unique privilege of spending the majority of his/her time working with people on a variety of levels. The pains, ills, and joys of the human situation automatically involve the life of the clergy person. He or she is commissioned by the Eternal Thou (a term coined by Martin Buber) to heal the brokenhearted, set at liberty them that are bruised, clothe the naked, and preach the Good News to the outcast, poor and disenherited. Thus the prevailing reality of mental health and mental illness is a subject which includes the service model of the clergy in the Local Church and includes the service model of the clergy in the Local Church and specialized institutional ministries.

An examination of the clergy's influence in the Mental Health field is portrayed in the works of Mental Health-Skills for Clergy by Dr. Dana Charry, Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling by Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., and The Care of Souls in the Black Church by Carroll M. Felton, Jr. These authors have persuasively examined the valuable place of the clergy in providing care and comfort to the troubled. For instance, Charry and Clinebell gave validity to a ten year study on "Mental Health in America"<sup>26</sup> which shows these results:

<u>Professions</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1976</u>
Clergy	42%	39%
Physicians (nonpsychiatric)	29%	21%
Psychiatrists & Psychologists	17%	29%
Other Mental Health Professionals	10%	20%

Clinebell further states that "one out of ten Americans in 1976 said at one time or another they talked to their clergy about a personal problem."<sup>27</sup> In addition, Dr. Charry quoted a portion of the Report of The President's Commission on Mental Health in 1978:

Religious leaders, professional and lay at any one time are in face to face relationship with hundreds of thousands of persons who are in emotionally hazardous periods of stress such as are caused by illness, surgery,

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<sup>26</sup>Dana Charry, Mental Health Skills for Clergy (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1981), p. 13 and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p.47-48.

<sup>27</sup>Clinebell, p. 48.



accidents, divorce, natural disasters, unemployment, moving and by many forms of loss and grief. 28

From a slightly different perspective, Carroll has examined the task of the black clergy in the Mental Health enterprise.<sup>29</sup> His effort is somewhat new, in that what has been written concerning the Black Church involved the areas of Theology, preaching, Christian Education, worship and recently the Family. Only a few black authors and scholars have explored the Pastoral Care and Mental Health aspects of the black experience.

Carroll presents particular insights in the Community Mental Health field which makes the current emphasis on stress and emotional problems in the society, apart of the religious character of black people. Subsequently, the treatment of the Black Church and community mental health is of immense value of God's ebony people, as well as people in general. Because of the prevailing problems which related to Mental Health in America, any serious study on this subject will strike a note of understanding and hope for those who find life to be disquieting and difficult.

#### Definitions of Terms

1. Mental Health is the way a person thinks, feels,

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<sup>28</sup>Charry, p. 14.

<sup>29</sup>Carroll M. Felton, Jr. The Care of Souls In The Black Church (New York: MLK Fellows Press, 1980), p. 64-66 & 89 thru 94.

interacts and behaves. A mentally healthy person is well adjusted in the community. In addition, the mentally healthy person is reasonably worry-free and can handle the usual daily tensions and crises of living which may involve moments of fear, anxiety, distrust, and depression.

2. Mental Illness on an emotional or intrapsychic breakdown which impedes an individual from effectively cope with or overcoming a crisis or stress-related problems in life. A mentally ill person is "emotionally disturbed." In addition, the individual is frequently and severely worry-bound, and tends to exaggerate these same thoughts and feelings of fear, anger, anxiety, distrust and depression.

3. Community Mental Health Center - was set in motion by the Mental Health Study Act of 1955. In 1963, the movement's supporters at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) won the struggle for federal legislation to build and fund CMHCS. In what we described as a "bold new approach," President Kennedy (1963) proposed the development of community-based programs to incorporate both treatment and prevention. The two central tasks of the CMHC involve the development of a wide range of direct patient services and of indirect mental health services (i.e. programs in consultation and mental health education).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>David L. Snow and Peter Newton, "Task, Social Structure, and Social Process In the Community Mental Health Center Movement," American Psychologist 48 (August 1976), 582.

4. Community Mental Health Care represents an inter-relatedness between the religious institution and the secular community in the quest of achieving sociopsychological and spiritual well being. The term also implies an action/programmatic approach of caring institutions which empower individuals to overcome socioeconomic deprivation and political discrimination and oppression. Finally, people in the community context are involved in creatively embracing meaning and hope during times of crises, stress and ambiguity.

5. Urban Black Church has its roots in the religious lives of Afro Americans whose pilgrimage began in Africa and developed as an institutional phenomenon on American soil. The historic "Invisible Institution" during slavery progressed through these steps, visible institution, negro church and finally the black church, which depicted black people's assertive effort to achieve dignity, peoplehood, equality and liberation over the course of three hundred and sixty-five years in America. The urban Black Church represents and identifies with the struggles, hardships, joys, pains and dreams black people who resided in an urban or inner city context.

6. Black Pastor/Preacher is an individual who has been the indigenous leader of black people dated back to the hamlets and huts of seventeenth century Africa and re-interpreted as the spokesperson and shepherd to the

oppressed community on American soil. This individual is constantly under pressure to guide, sustain, direct and comfort his/her congregation in stressful circumstances. The Black Pastors/Preacher's strength is derived from embracing the hopes and dreams of people whose lives are sometimes bruised by tragedy and shakened by crises.

#### Work Previously Done in the Field

The subject of Mental Health and Church presents voluminous amount of experts who have eloquently and concisely spoken on various ramifications in this relationship. To cite a few, Clinebell's books Community Mental Health - The Role of Church and Temple and The Mental Health Ministry of the Local Church; David Switzer's The Minister as Crises Counselor and Charry's Mental Health Skills for Clergy. These authors have written excellent books on the subject. For example, Clinebell's Community Mental Health comprised of a host of scholars in the fields of pastoral counseling, social work, psychiatry and psychology who have presented a comprehensive examination on the clergy, laity, and community interrelatedness.

Switzer and Charry have presented unique role of the local pastor as a counselor and spiritual director in the church setting. Charry, a psychiatrist who has over 5 years directly trained clergy persons in pastoral counseling and mental health skills, offers insightful materials in

evaluation, intervention and referral.

From the black perspective seven authors are representative of the subject under discussion. Lawrence Gray, (ed.) Mental Health-A Challenge to the Black Community; Mitchell Curry's Doctor of Ministry project, "The Role of Religious Experience in Psychotherapy and Mental Illness of Black People in the South Central Los Angeles;" Carroll Felton, The Care of Souls in the Black Church; Edward Wimberly, Pastoral Care in the Black Church and Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Values; David Hurst's Doctor of Theology dissertation "The Shepherding of Black Christians," Archie Smith, The Relational Self-Ethics and Theory from a Black Church Perspective; and finally, Reginald Jones, Black Psychology, 2nd Edition.

The seven writers succinctly described the socio/psychological, political, religious factors involved in developing, nourishing and deforming the black psyche on American soil. The selection of scholars in the edited works of Gary and Jones showed the various social systems which constitute black existence and black life. The reality of social support systems in the black community was examined in relation to mental health and mental illness. The Project will explore the system relationship of secular support institutions and the church toward an objective assessment as to the durability and stability of black life in an urban setting.

The four reference books previously mentioned along with the eight books above make up a partial list of some previous studies that address in some degree the theme-"The Urban Black Church's role in Community Mental Health Care." Other pertinent data have been researched and will be included in the forthcoming chapters. Nevertheless, these materials offer a foundational framework toward investigating in greater detail the specific ways in which the urban black church through an educational/training model can influence mental health.

#### The Research Design

The Project is design to investigate those areas of similarity between community mental health and pastoral care which are crucial in strenghtening and empowering black people in the urban context. The religious pilgrimage of black people in this country entails multifaceted interpretations of God, Church, mission and fellowship. These subjects are significant in developing an understanding of community mental health in the sacred and secular contexts. The value of combining mental health and pastoral care in the community framework focuses on a wholistic approach that speakes to black people's struggles, victories, joys, and pains on a daily basis.

Furthermore, an examination of community mental health will reveal some crucial causal factors of crime,

relational abuse, and violence in the urban environment, which will enhance the inreach <sup>31</sup> and outreach ministries of the local black church and other churches. The Black Church must grasp on a greater level the harsh realities of urban life outside the sanctity of holy walls, and thus it can become a more influential partner with other social structures which are attempting to rehabilitate and treat the victims and persecutors of society.

The writer realizes that to discuss mental health and religion from a black perspective implies actual examples of church's involvement in varied degrees of mental health education and training. The method towards achieving this task will include the questionnaire process and interview format which will encompass pertinent information from clergy, laypersons, mental health professionals and community residents. Tape recorded of significance events will be used in this context.

This study will draw materials from the extremely successful three years (1980-1983) Mental Health Training Model for Inner City Ministers sponsored by the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, as well as its on-going counseling and training programs with designated local black churches in the city.

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Clinebell, p. 31.

This program has proven to be valuable in offering significant service to over fifty clergypersons and many more laypersons in the community. In addition, the writer will review an ambitious proposal by the Gathering (an ecumenical ministerial group of Los Angeles in 1981) which has failed to be implemented, but yet it still is needed for these challenging times.

#### Basic Limitations of the Research

The subject of community mental health as implied in a black religious context is a new endeavor. As with any new endeavor, the material and analysis are subjected to refinement and additional expressions of interpretation and research. The accumulative researched materials do offer some insights into the subject under discussion. The writer has brought his own experiences and insights to the study. Thus this study will be objective and subjective in nature.

This dual inquiry does reflect personal bias in some sections. Although this is the case, the writer firmly believes that the worth and authenticity of information in the following pages will not be diminished or lessened.

The scope of this study can not review and present all of the relevant materials on mental health, pastoral care and religion which are designed to improve and enhance human life. In addition, this study can not investigate all of the valuable church ministries across the country



which are keeping families, neighborhoods, and communities together and vital in the midst of life's ambiguities and tragedies. The writer is unable to offer a "perfect plan" for achieving a communal setting, minus hardships, difficulties and sufferings. Such a plan or situation is not realistic in a world which is inhibited by imperfect human beings.

Nevertheless, the forthcoming chapters are designed to trace the impact of community life in Africa and America as experienced by black people. Materials from notable scholars of African life and American life will be presented, as a way of establishing the foundation for community mental health care. However, it should be mentioned that the term, community health care was not verbalized as an actual conceptual reality by early black people during slavery to the late 1950s. This term denotes a methodical reference which has been implied among communal personalities and social assistance programs which have been essential in sustaining and guiding black people while in America.

The Project will present four chapters in the following matter. Chapter 1, is designed to investigate the sociopsychological factors which marked distinctive pre-slavery and slavery times. The reality of slavery in the primary feature in the development of community in relation to mental health and mental illness. The subject of community mental health is traced on the plantation as well

as Northern city life. The ability of black people to adapt, suffer, endure and overcome is the primary focal point in a church/community context. Chapter 2, is structured to examine how urban life has developed and shaped community mental health among black people. There is not a homogeneous response of black people in relation to the social and economic realities surrounding urban life. The continual presence of social prejudice and institutionalized racism has brought out a host of problems and pressures of black people in the context of intrapsychic formation and collective cooperation. The Rev. Jesse Jackson's Presidential candidacy of 1984 did play a significant role in generating an expression of unity and a positive self-image of black people in the country. And, finally, the realities of the "Tech phenomenon" of automation, achievement and productivity in relation to American culture and life will be examined. These trends of thought are essential in understanding community mental health. Chapter 3, is focused on the functions of the black ministry in the area of pastoral care. The traditional church activities of the preacher/pastor are examined in relation to community mental health. The demands and responsibilities of the black minister are seen in light of personal mental health. And, finally Chapter 4, brings out the practical application of the urban church in community life. It also focuses on the strengths and, limitations of the local church, and concludes with a pro-

posed Educational and Training Model for local urban churches is examined and preliminary results are set forth.

## Chapter 1

## IN RETROSPECT:

## BLACK PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE

I've been in the storm so long, you know I've  
 been in the storm so long,  
 Oh, Lord, give me more time to pray,  
 I've been in the storm so long-I am a  
 motherless child,  
 singing, Oh Lord, give me more time to pray.  
 .....  
 My children need you now,  
 My neighbor need you now,  
 singing, Oh Lord, give me more time to pray,  
 I've been in the storm so long.

Just look what a shape I'm in.  
 Just look what a shape I'm in.  
 Crying, Oh Lord, give me more time to pray.  
 I've been in the storm so long.  
 - nineteen - century Black Spiritual <sup>1</sup>

The above nineteenth century black spiritual, "Been in the storm so long," depicted the mental and spiritual attitude of many black people who had experienced the harsh realities of slavery in America. They did not experience much joy and happiness in a social environment which viewed them as inferior, subhuman and childlike beings. Many of them would remember a better life in Africa. It has been well documented by scholars <sup>2</sup> that the region of West Africa,

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<sup>1</sup>Leon F. Litwack, Been In The Storm So Long (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), preface.

<sup>2</sup>Albert Raboteau, Slave Religion (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 3-92 and Harry V. Richardson, Dark Salvation. (New York: Doubleday Press, 1976), ch. 2.

where the majority of black people were captured and placed into the vicious system of subjugation and slavery in America and Caribbeans, had elaborated systems of communal Life.

It was not surprising that the African who became the black slave or freed negro would develop some forms of community which resembled personhood, self-esteem and somebodiness. The basis of this assumption is derived from examining second major areas, pre-slavery and slavery in relation to community life. The purpose is to observe how black people struggled and worked to established social systems which enhanced a positive and constructive outlook of life in the midst of destructive and unhealthy forces.

#### A. PRE-SLAVERY: THE WEST AFRICAN SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, there appeared on the television screen and movie screen a host of "jungle films" such as King Kong, Tarzan, Jungle Jim, Jungle Boy and Sheena which depicted white Euroamericans who ventured into "darkest" Africa in search of lost loved ones, treasure, ivory, and wild animals for the circus, promotional schemes, or the zoo. The African was seen as the savage, animal, native and guide (the one who helped white folks through the dangerous jungle), and the white person was seen as the hero, goddess, adventurer, explorer or exploiter. We saw such characters

as Tarzan, Sheena and Jungle Jim ruled the natives because of skin-pigmentation, intelligent, and wild animal control. Unfortunately, the general public received a white dominated view of African life and thus certain negative racial images and stereotypes were manufactured and perpetuated as the actual reality for many blacks and whites in America.

From these films and early books on Africa, our knowledge of Africa included glimpses of tribal living which consisted of half-naked africans, a chief, a witch-doctor who practiced voodoo or black magic, hunters and warriors. These Africans were not seen as having a sophisticated and enriching communal life which encompassed family, marriage, child-rearing, politics, religion and work relations. The reality of "tribal living" is an essential character of Africa.<sup>3</sup> However, there were (are) a host of additional social factors involved in forming community. The tribe is the outer expression of traditional African life style.

As with most civilizations, people come together out of common needs, concerns and interests. Language and customs are crucial factors which motivated people to stop at a location, clean the area for housing and establish a

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<sup>3</sup>John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 1-5, and Wade W. Nobles, "African Philosophy: Foundation For Black Psychology," in Reginald Jones (ed.) Black Psychology (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 24-25.

climate of social encounters which becomes routine and natural. The early Africans were no difference in establishing the social context for community.

It has been mentioned that the tribal character was the dominated social model in African life. The social structure of the tribe developed out of a wide range of dialects and family blood ties among African peoples. Each tribe represented a particular dialect or language, so that the people could understand each other. Each tribe was located in an area known as a village. A village consisted of tree manufactured huts for living, storage areas, meeting places and cooking areas.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a village usually resided near water, vegetation and wild life that were essential for survival in the jungle. In addition, a village represented a few families up to several hundreds and it encompassed a radius of a few miles up to twenty or more depending on the distance of the neighboring tribe.

The people in each tribal village had laws and customs which governed their relations with each other.<sup>5</sup> Within this tribal village setting, the Africans adhered to three social realities, religion, the concept of time, and

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<sup>4</sup>Personal observation which were shaped by television films and movies on Africa.

<sup>5</sup>Nobles, p. 24.

kinships collective unity which guided their understand of community.

1. The Social Formation of the Community

The Africans did not establish a village without the presence of religion as a guiding force in their lives. Somehow they knew that self sufficiency and individualism did not fully meet the requirements of the human heart and spirit. Within them lurked a deep and abiding desire to be in harmony with a higher being and concurrently find value in relating to each other. What was commonly known as traditional African religion, the people were able to make sense out of the world and thusly received insight and power to gather together in various groups. Dr. John S. Mbiti, a noted African scholar, verified these previous statements in the following manner: "Religion is the strongest element in traditional background, and exerts probably the greatest influence upon the thinking and living of the people concerned." <sup>6</sup>

With such a prominent force operating among African peoples, we realize as did John Mbiti that no one religion spoke for all. The freedom of choice was just as rich and diverse for the early Africans as the modern visions of Christian pluralism in America. Mbiti emphasizes this

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<sup>6</sup>Mbiti, pg. 1.



clearly, "Africans were (are) notoriously religious, and each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it."<sup>7</sup> From this viewpoint, he added, "we speak of African traditional religions in plural because there are about one thousand African peoples (tribes) and each has its own religious system."<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the African people regarded their varied forms of religion quite seriously and any violation or discounting of this reality had a profound impact on their lives.

Although there are at least one thousand religious systems to match the equally numbered tribes, we learned from the writings of Wade Nobles, Henry H. Mitchell and Mbiti that the chief characteristics of them are ethics, proverbs, oral traditions, and morals.<sup>9</sup> These characteristics are of particular significance in a communal context. The very notion of "being human" found authenticity in religion and practical application in the community. The African was moved to experience his/her humanity as a religious creature in a communal context.<sup>10</sup> The African discovered the power of

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid. <sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>See Henry H. Mitchell Black Belief (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

<sup>10</sup>Nobles, p. 25 and Mitchell, p. 61-62.

self in the framework of others.

This bond of otherness, which was (is) prominent in traditional African religions, gave the people a sensitivity in supporting each other during happy occasions and sad occasions. They were involved in such communal events as births, weddings, harvests, plantings and funerals.<sup>11</sup> As these events occurred, the dominate human response was "celebration"<sup>12</sup> which affirmed life. Thusly, the Africans came together to rejoice and wept in relation to the situation. In a related fashion, the concept of time played a valuable part in the pre-slavery African's view of community.

When we examine the concept of time in African life, we are struck by its two dimensional characters, the past, (a Swahili word, Zamani) and the present, (another Swahili word, Sasa),<sup>13</sup> which emphasized the "now" as an immediate and concret occurrence. The African did not worry about the future since such a reality was always becoming. This concept of time enabled the African to value present relationships and maintain an appreciation of persons and events which had impacted on his/her life.

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<sup>11</sup> Mitchell, p. 62.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Mbiti, p. 135.

Having this type of time interpretation made them particularly interested in history, family ties and recollection of events. When a separation occurred among Africans, they preceded to consciously place the person(s), thing, or event in a Zamani mold, which preserved the uniqueness and distinctive qualities of the situation in a living past. It was customary for Africans who had similar experiences and memories to share and thus maintain a communal relationship. Dr. Wade Nobles shows the binding of individuals in the Sasa and Zamani structure:

The Sasa dimension binds individuals and their immediate environment together. As such, it determines the experimental communality, encompassing the conscious limits of the tribe. The Zamani dimension, however, encompasses the Sasa dimension in a sort of spiritual medium and thus gives a common foundation to the universal reality and binds together all created things. All is embraced within the Zamani. 14

The above quotation illuminates the close and binding ties which existed among African peoples. They saw the Zamani period as a continual natural rhythm that offered identity between the living and the living dead. No person in the community was totally lost or forgotten as long as someone was alive to remember. Some children in the Mende tribe (a West African people) were named after particular ancestor, especially when they bear resemblance to him/her.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Nobles, p. 27

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

The pride of Africans was apparent in their interpretation of time.

They did not foster a low self-esteem mentality, or minimize the works and deeds of those who died. Clearly, the opposite prevailed, they had ~~respected~~ for the dead and an abiding desire to keep individual and group histories alive for themselves and coming generations. This type of thinking by the Africans leads to the final social reality, kinship: collective unity, as it relates to the formation of community.

The kinship system played a crucial role in developing and maintaining the communal life among Africans. The basis view of kinship denotes three relational types: 1) the blood tie family which consists of father, mother, offsprings and relatives; 2) The extended family which includes tribal members and 3) the ontological family connection which embraces the unborn and "the living dead." <sup>16</sup>

The very survival of a people or tribe was nourished and maintained through the deep sense of kinship. The community was a family (a view held by such West African tribes as Ashanti and Akan peoples), <sup>17</sup> and hence one living witness was a valid testimony of the existence of those who had passed on. The blood line and communal connection through tribe and religion established the care and

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid. and Mbiti, p. 107-110.

<sup>17</sup>Nobles, p. 29.

familiarity necessary for African people to carry on against negative forces and seemingly overcome insurmountable odds. The words of Mbiti supplement what has been said:

"The deep sense of kinship, with all it implies, has been one of the strongest forces in traditional African life. Kinship is reckoned through blood and betrothal (engagement and marriage). It is kinship which controls social relationships between people in a given community: it governs partial customs and regulations, it determines the behaviour of one individual towards another. Indeed, this sense of kinship binds together the entire life of the 'tribe', and is even extended to cover animals, plants and non-living objects through the 'totemic' system. 18

From Mbiti's words, kinship was highly value among early traditional Africans. Before the missionaries came to Africa with their bibles, the African already had an awareness of personhood and an existential view of "love thy neighbor as thyself." A kind of collective feeling among Africans did exist, as well as an appreciation of pooling their resources for joint ventures to improve community life. As Nobles so aptly states, "whatever happened to the corporate body, the tribe, and whatever happened to the tribe, happened to the individual."<sup>19</sup> This bond of mutual destiny included in the kinship context did give credence to "a caring community" reality in Africa.

The social formation as seen in religion, the concept of time and kinship in accordance to community life did

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<sup>18</sup>Mbiti, p. 135.

<sup>19</sup>Nobles, p. 18.

not spring forth without the assistance of key personalities. Thus, the final part in the Pre-Slavery section is at hand.

## 2. The Key Personalities in the Community

Within a typical tribal village, there were specific individuals who had positions of authority among the people. These persons were the guiding forces which strengthened, encouraged, healed, and sometimes frightened the community family. Although each tribe had its own belief system, language, religion and custom, there were approximately three specialists <sup>20</sup> whose presence, skills and practice which made indomitable expressions on the African psyche and life style. These specialists were as follows: 1) The medicine man, 2) mediums and diviners, and finally 3) the conjurers.

As servants of the people, these specialists utilized skills and practices from each other which enhanced the diversity of service opportunities presented in the African community. The Africans expected specific needs to be fulfilled as these individuals lived and walked among them. The purpose of this section is two fold. First, each specialist will be generally described in terms of preparation, if any, skills, and practices and secondly, the role of each specialist had in the traditional African community.

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Mbiti, p. 217.

The first personality or specialist was the medicine man. He was not the innoble, crafty or crazy voodoo-witch-doctor who appeared on many jungle films in America and Europe. The movie and television viewers have been grossly mistreated by the film industry and cultural racism in terms of not understanding the character and social impact of this servant of the people in Africa. Notable scholars in the field of African history have well documented materials on the value of the medicine man to his community. For instance, Mbiti has described, "he was the greatest gift to the African community."<sup>21</sup> This personality had a prominent place in every village in Africa. He was known as the friend of the community and his accessibility was crucial in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life among his people.

There was not a typical or classical call experienced by an African to enter into the medicine men vocation. Nevertheless, certain experiences such as a medicine man passes on the profession to his son or other younger relative was used.<sup>22</sup> And in some societies, a person became a medicine man who possessed special gifts or powers obtained either through birth or eating certain "medicines."<sup>23</sup>

His character must be of high caliber. The people expected him to be trustworthy, upright morally, friendly, willing and ready to serve, able to discuss people's needs

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. <sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 218. <sup>23</sup>Ibid.

and not be exorbitant in his charges.<sup>24</sup> The duties of the medicine man were as follows: "concerned with suffering, sickness, disease and misfortune, assisted in setting personal and family disputes which originated from witchcrafted and magic; and treated the spiritual and physical ailments of people." <sup>25</sup> He was the pastor and doctor of the community. He had to be well versed in the religious ethos of the people since many of his cases had religious implications. Therefore, the role of the medicine is summarized by the following words of Mbiti:

The medicine man symbolized the hopes of society: hopes of good health, protection and security from evil forces, prosperity and good fortune, and ritual cleansing when harm or impurities have been contracted. ...Without a doubt, the medicine men were (are) the friends, pastors, psychiatrists and doctors of traditional African villages and communities. <sup>26</sup>

The medicine man commanded a tremendous amount of respect and influence among his people. Of course, those who functioned in this capacity were not perfect beings above the frailties and weaknesses inherent in the human situation. Nevertheless, his presence offered immeasurable comfort and guidance in the village community.

The next category of specialist includes the mediums and diviners. Both of these specialists had gifts in dis-

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.    <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 223 and secondary source: Gayraud Wilmore, Black Religion and Black Radicalism (New York: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 17-18.



cernment of spirits and the living dead. Their particular skills in the spirit world were different from the medicine man. The medicine man did not delve too much into psychic reading or spiritual connection with deceased individuals.

When an African family wanted to know about a deceased, they would visit the medium in his/her hut for the purpose of talking with the deceased. Basically, the medium was open to spirit "possession" and thus he/she functioned as a link or vessel between the natural world and spiritual world.<sup>27</sup> The medium did not possess any extraordinary gifts or skills; when the medium was not under the power of the spirit world, he/she was a normal person in the community. On some occasions, the medium gave pertinent information concerning, the cause, nature and treatment of disease to the medicine man<sup>28</sup> who in turn was better able to help the victim in the community.

On a similar vein, the diviner received his name from the functional emphasis of divination. Those who functioned in the category exhibited the following characteristics: they were (are) the agents of unveiling mysteries of human life. This was done through the use of mediums, oracles, being possessed, divination objects, common sense, intuitive knowledge and insight, hypnotism and other secret knowledge."<sup>29</sup> The diviner kept his eyes and

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<sup>27</sup>Mbiti, p. 225.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.      <sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

ears opened to community happenings so that he was knowledgeable and aware of problems and issues that arose in the continual present or (Sasa). He was a community oriented servant.

To become a diviner the individual had to be trained privately by other diviners and this relationship would last between three to seven years in length.<sup>30</sup> Upon completion, the newly appointed diviner would embark on a journey of public service which would be of immense importance to the tribal community. The magnitude of his presence was expressed by John Mbiti:

Like the medicine men, the diviners were regarded as friends of their communities. They played the role of counselors, judges, 'comforters', suppliers of assurance and confidence during people's crises, advisers, pastors and priests, seers, fortune tellers and solvers of problems, and revealers of secret like thefts, imminent danger and coming events. 31

On a somewhat different perspective, the third specialist is the conjurer whose presence manifested admiration and fear among his people. They came to him during times of personal crises and difficulties and he often times employed charms, medicines, herbs, and secret portions along with specific instructions for them to follow.

Sometimes the conjurer concocted harmful portions or charms which would protect the holder but would be detrimental to the recipient. On occasions, a distressful or tormented victim of a charm or portion from a conjurer

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 231-232.

would request the intervention of the medicine man who would offer an antidote or being willing to persuade the conjurer to relieve the spell. The mark contrast between the conjurer and medicine man was given by Gayraud Wilmore:

The term 'medicine man' was called good magic. The conjurer, or witch doctor plied his trade more frequently for antisocial purposes. And was the object of fear among most African peoples. Such persons were sought out by those who wished to harm or destroy others...In Africa, a witch or conjurer, was sometimes driven from the village, if not hunted down and slain. 32

In spite of the harsh treatment experienced by the conjurer, he was an established specialist or personality in the African community. Some people eagerly used the conjurer to cope with, or overcome a host of problems which had to be resolved by any means necessary. If not, they would have been overwhelmed and eventually beaten down to a state of cynicism and defeatism.

These specialists, the medicine man, medium diviner and conjurer were not the only significant figures in the community. But, in the case of the African peoples' disheartening experiences with slavery, these personalities illustrated the various methods in which African people kept sane and healthy in a communal setting. As we progress to the themes on slavery, we shall observe how these specialist appeared and functioned among their people in America.

## B. SLAVERY: THE INTEGRATION OF THE OLD AND NEW ELEMENTS OF BLACK COMMUNITY

Numerous books have been published on the subject of slavery. Both white and black scholars have been credited with insightful and stimulating works on the horrors and sorrows of slave life in America. The writer has devoted hours of reading in "The Peculiar Institution," as described by Kenneth Stampp, in an attempt to learn the reasons within the country's psyche which produced and maintained such a corrupted system for nearly two hundred and seventy-five years.

### 1. No Picnic For Black Folks

The slavery system administered a devastating effect on million of Africans who were stripped of tribal identity and community connection and suddenly placed in an environment which was depersonalized and dehumanized for them. The origin of this tragic progress began in the tribal communal structure of African society. Historical documents showed that tribal wars and conflicts were instrumental in effectively establishing and operating the triangular slave trade system. The method by which this method was stated by Eric Williams,

It was the tribal wars in Africa, European, interest in exchanging commodities and the need for processing cheap labor in America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which started the slave trade system.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (New York: Capricorn Press 1966), p. 16-29.

The slave trade experience was not a picnic for black people who were kidnapped from their hamlets in Africa. An eye witness account of how the Africans were treated on a typical slaver, as slave ships were called, was given by a boarding party:

They heard a horrid din and tumult among them (the slaves)...They opened the hatches and turned them up on deck. They were manacled together, in twos and threes. Their horror may well conceived when they found a number of them in different stages of suffocation; many of them were foaming at the mouth, and in the last agonies--many were dead. Many destroyed one another, in hope of procuring room to breathe; men strangled those next to them, and women drove nails into each others brains. Many unfortunate creatures...took the first opportunity of leaping overboard, and getting rid, in this way, of an intolerable life. 34

On arriving in the New World, the African (those who survived the middle passage) were no longer proud peoples of Ashanti, Ewe, Ibo, Mandingo or Yoruba tribes but rather became property, servants and slaves for white folks. Now, these different tribal people were clustered together in a foreign and strange land and all of the imaginable fear and despair intruded into their minds and flowed into their hearts.

They quickly discovered that their own languages, customs, beliefs and religions were not acceptable and the consequences of which led to the long periods of isolation, confusion, low self-esteem, bitterness and hostility toward

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<sup>34</sup>George Leinwand, The Negro In The City (New York: Pocket Book, 1968), p. 16-29.

their persecutors. The sociopsychological process of reducing a black person to a slave was mapped by Joe Kovel,

For the American slaves did not simply own the body of his black slave...He went one step further in the cultural development, he first reduced the human self of his black slave to a body and then reduced the body to a thing; he dehumanized his slave, made him quantifiable, and thereby absorbed him into a rising world market of productive exchange. 35

The success of such a heinous evil enabled the slaver in effect to said to his slave,

While I owe much, much more than my body, you own not even your body: your body shall be detached from yourself and yourself shall be thereby reduced to subhuman status. And being detached and kept alive, your body shall save me in many ways: by work on my Capitalist plantations to extract the most that can be taken from the land in the cheapest and therefore most rational manner; as a means to my bodily pleasure—both as nurse to my children and as female body for sexual use; and as medium of exchange, saleable like any other commodity of exchange...you have no family, since a family is a system that pertains to human beings, and you are not human. 36

Flogging was a method used by slavemaster to further ingrain into the black people the idea of his or her nobodiness. John W. Blassingame's penetrating book confirms this point:

A master started early to impress upon the mind of the young black the awesome power of whiteness: he made the slave bow upon meeting him, stand in his presence, and accept floggings from his young children; he flogged the slave for fighting with young whites. The ritual of difference was required at every turn: the

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<sup>35</sup>Joe Kovel, White Racism: A Psychohistory (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), p. 18.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 18-19.

slave was flogged for disputing a white man's word, kicked for walking between two whites on a street and not allowed to call his wife or mother "Mrs." 37

This example of young black's experience with a callous slavemaster was only a tip of the iceberg in the wide-spread use of flogging during slavery. Blassingame states this fact:

Flogging of 50 to 75 lashes were not uncommon. On numerous occasions, masters or planters branded, stubbed, tarred, feathered, burned, shackled, tortured, maimed, crippled, mutilated and castrated (to separate the penis from the body) their slaves. Thousands of slaves were flogged so severely that they were permanently scarred. In Mississippi, a fiendish master once administered 1000 lashes to a slave. 38

After reading these above deplorable accounts of inhumane treatment experience of black people of African descendent, it was amazing that these individuals did not give up and die. Some of them did find life under slavery to be unbearable. There were incidents of black slaves succumbing to the pressures of life and exhibited deep emotional problems. Each person has a breaking point in which he or she displayed the outward manifestations of inward pain and hurt of the soul and heart. There are documented accounts of slaves who became uncontrollable and hysterical in response to family separation, personal abuse, and local intolerance and injustice.

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<sup>37</sup>John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 259.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 263.

## 2. The Causes of Mental Illness:

The reality of mental illness did exist in the lives of black people. The colonial government tried to ignore the fact of its presence. But, Blassingame gives us some valuable data on the subject: "the hopelessness of slavery occasionally caused mental illness in the quarters and led to the inclusion of bondsmen among the insane and idiotic persons enumerated in the United States censuses."<sup>39</sup> The slavesmasters had a bizarre way of treating themselves. On the one hand, some of them would use harsh means to kill the spirit of somebodyness in the slave; yet, on the other hand, these same individuals would make periodic trips to the quarters in order to detect and separate any disturbed or troubled slave. These men wanted the best of two worlds: an obedient and cooperative slave who was able to maintain good mental health. This type of mentality of the slave-master or planter was in itself sick and mentally ill. Of course, such an interpretation of that time was not the societal norm or social acceptable.

The ways in which the slaves were forced to live in the Plantation quarters manifested certain unhealthy conditions. This is seen thusly:

Birth defects resulting from inadequate prenatal care, organic diseases, and dietary deficiencies took their

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 298.



toll on the mental health of slaves. The greatest causes of mental illness in the quarters, however, were excessive punishment and the separation of family members. 40

The issue of the separation of family member was graphically dramatized by an eye witness account of Susan Boggs, a former Virginia slave, who recalled in 1863, a slave woman "who went crazy because her two sons were sold and sent to the trader's jail. She went up and down the streets, crying like an animal." 41 This weeping mother truly depicted the deep emotional trauma experienced by countless similar mothers who helplessly watched loved ones being taken away-never to return again. We can not minimize physical punishment enough, as John Blassingame says, "it is undeniably truth that, systematic cruelty, repeated blows to the head and frequently floggings often led to temporary or permanent insanity among slaves." 42

The problem of mental illness was not just an occurrence in the southern region of the country. Careful investigation of materials doing the 18th and 19th centuries indicates that southern slaves as well as northern blacks had to assist loved ones with varied emotional problems. 43

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 299-300

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>43</sup>Todd L. Savitt, Medicine and Slavery (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p. 251-258.

The presence of mental suffering was not excluded from the interest and care of black people in the communal setting. In spite of the negative conditions experienced by black people, they still maintained a functional view of family life. Dr. Todd Savitt verified this view, "deranged plantation and urban slaves had one advantage over insane whites: they usually had two or (more) families watching over them. What the master's family could not provide in terms of medical, physical, and psychological comfort, the slave community might."<sup>44</sup>

The function of the slave community was a striking contrast to the African community which represented home and security for Africans during the pre slavery period. The issue of mental health and mental illness was presented within the experiential context of black life in America. Therefore, the pulse beat and energy of the slave community focused on keeping black people as sane and mentally healthy as possible. How black people, who were stigmatized by slavery, adapted some of the African ways with the Christian experience established the foundations for the urban community of today.

It should be noted that the slave community did not represent all black people who lived in this period. Some parts of the south and north had "free" blacks who did not

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

experienced the severity of chattel servitude, but yet they knew the plight of social prejudice and discrimination. They were consciously aware that skin pigmentation was a form of judging human value and worth in the society at large. Ira Berlin, has persuasively presented the unique problems and issues that haunted the "free" black class(es).<sup>45</sup> Hence, no black person was completely immune to the influence of slavery.

### 3. The Place of Religion

As we journeyed into the slave community to observe how its residents were able to cope with and live in the midst of oppression and suffering. We are struck by the traces of African religion and the adaptation of communal solidarity which were practiced among the people. Previous travelers on this same course have brilliantly revealed black people's heart and spirit which enabled them to meet sorrow with gladness, grief, with hope, and defeat with creative optimism. But the searching question is at hand, how did they construct a mental health perspective in an imperfect and trying communal setting? For us to answer such a question will present new insights into the relationship between mental health and religion.

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<sup>45</sup>Ira Berlin, Slaves Without Masters (New York: Vintage Press, 1974), p. 296-299.

During the early seventeen century when the slave trade system was just beginning to be set into place for operation between Europe, Africa and North America, some of the captured Africans were kings, princes, and former priests and religious specialists.<sup>46</sup> Seemingly, these displaced leaders would be completely disoriented and resigned to a life of anonymity and isolation. Some did succumb to the existential reality of slavery and faded into obscurity. But a sufficient number of them remained true to their calling and vocation, and thus they proceeded to secretly practice their skills and gifts among those people who could understand. Earlier in this study on African culture we discovered that religion and kinship were dominated features among all of the tribal villages in Africa. A people can lose all earthly possessions and be stripped naked but the torch of Faith and Hope within their conscious and unconscious will remain intact.

Slowly, as the Africans were acculturated into colonial America, they merged the notions of God as the Supreme Being, good and evil, the spirit world, and fragmented ethics within the controlled biblical teachings of white preachers.<sup>47</sup> This process enabled them to maintain an element of self-respect and self-esteem. In addition, they

<sup>46</sup>Wilmore, p. 6.

<sup>47</sup>Mitchell, p. 59-94.

developed social and psychological techniques that were designed to reserve something "uncontaminated" which resembled a refuge.

The notion of the "invisible institution," as described by E. Franklin Frazier and C. Eric Lincoln was an expression of this uncontaminated reality where the slaves would congregate in the Plantation quarters, or in the forest, or woods at night and be themselves to feel those moments-once felt in Africa-the releasing through shout, prayer and song of joy, celebration and hope in a continual now. Albert Raboteau, John Blassingame, Eugene Genoverse, W.E.B. Dubois, Carroll Felton and Harry V. Richardson, are of few of many, who graphically detailed the marvelous elements of African religion and Christianity which produced black personhood and empowerment.

A glimpse of how the slaves retained their African religious expressions within the new context of American life is seen as follows:

The slaves' insistence on shouting harked back to Africa in both form and content. The style, which subsequently came to dominate America popular dancing in a variety of versions, could not have been more clearly African. The same might also be said about the insistence that the community worship of God in a way that integrated the various forms of human expression-song, dance and prayer, all with call-and-response, as parts of a single offering-the beauty of which pays homage of God. 48

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<sup>48</sup>Eugene Genovese, Roll Jordan Roll (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 234.

The above statement shows that the slaves' dream of a better day was not dashed on the seashore of skepticism or acute pessimism. Many of them were able to reach deep within and usher forth on a conscious level confidence and steadfastness in the midst of tumultuous waves of adversity and shifting winds of persecution. The strength of African religion laid the groundwork for them to aid others who became weary and disheartened with life.

Therefore the slaves' desire to establish a new kinship was made possible through the vehicle of religion. In other words, religion was the foundation for caring and nourishing meeting sites which eventually became extended families.

#### 4. The Ministry and Community Mental Health

It was the slave preachers on the southern Plantation and the black denominational preacher in the northern city who borne the heavy burden of leadership in relation to establishing the kinship reality among black people. The Black preacher in the words of Dr. Charles V. Hamilton, "can not be characterized as being one particular personality or type but should be seen as a symbol representing different men and women who perform various ministerial functions in relation to their people."<sup>49</sup> He went on to say that "the Black

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<sup>49</sup>Charles V. Hamilton, The Black Preacher In America (New York: Morrow, 1972), p. 11-35.

preacher is not without weakness and unsavory behavioral patterns which are prevalent in all individuals."<sup>50</sup> But this does not exclude the fact that he played a crucial role in the life of his people during periods of acute social injustice and the seemingly unending wave of inhumane treatment from slavery to the twentieth century. The late great Howard Thurman penned these words:

Historically, the ante-bellum negro preacher was the greatest single factor in determining the spiritual destiny of the slave community. It was he who gave to the masses of his followers a point of view that became for them a veritable door of hope. His ministry was greatly restricted as to movement, function, and opportunities of leadership, but he himself was blessed with one important insight: he was convinced that every human was a child of God. This belief included the slave as well as the Master. <sup>51</sup>

The views of Hamilton and Thurman are instructional in relation to defining the character and value of the Black preacher. Now we proceed the functional aspects of the black preachers as seen on the Plantation and in the northern city. This approach will reveal his task as an African specialist in the slave community and his pastoral role in the northern urban church context. Specific examples of his ministry will show an involvement in community mental health problems.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Howard Thurman, Deep River and The Negro Spirituals Speaks of Life and Death (Dublin, In: Friends United Press, 1975), p. 17.

From the outset of the slave preacher's ministry, he had to perform similar tasks as his previous religious specialists in Africa. Because of the severity of slavery, he had to minister to the physical, social and mental needs of his people. Earlier in the study, the medicine man was like a pastor or psychiatrist in the tribal community and similarly the conjurer possessed powerful charms and portions that were used to punish and control evildoers. The slave preacher had to skillfully integrate the knowledge of both in accordance with the Gospel message. In some cases, slaves went to the actual tribal medicine man or conjurer in the Plantation for assistance which challenged, contradicted, or minimized the preacher's role as functional provider.<sup>52</sup> A statement of fact, old customs and belief systems did not completely died, and even today some black people practice voodum, charm and portion use, and follow emulators of traditional African ways.

Nevertheless, the slave preacher was the primary sociospiritual leader in the community. A task profile of the slave preacher was given by Blassingame:

The true shepherd of the black flock was the slave preacher...the black preacher was usually highly intelligent, resourceful, and noted for his powerful imagination and memory (mine emphasis specially in his preaching). He soled the sick, weak and fearful, uplift and inspire them. Suffering with his flock, he under-

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<sup>52</sup>Raboteau, p. 237-238.



stood their tribulations and was accepted as a counselor and arbiter in the quarters. 53

The slave preacher did not have an easy time being a counselor and arbiter in the quarters or other areas on the Plantation. He had to deal with such problems as rape, stealing, family incest, killing, physical abuses due to punishment lashes or violence afflicted between slaves over an issue, love affair, or merchandise, and, of course, personal problems such as alcoholism, low self-esteem, depression and loneliness. Black people were not perfect beings and living in an oppressive condition only intensified their experience with severe social and emotional problems.

The quarters provided a place where the slaves could act out their anger and frustration. When the male in particular was not able to escape to freedom or adequately experience respect from whites or family members, he resorted to drinking as a way of coping. As it is true today, alcohol does not solve the problem or completely soothe one's inner fire of anger and hate. The slave's response to drinking was no different. This assumption was succinctly stated in the following way:

Many slaves tried to drown their anger in the whiskey bottle, and if not drowned, the anger welling up was translated into many other forms. Sometimes the slave projected his aggression onto his fellow slaves: he might beat up, stab, or kill one of his fellow sufferers.

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<sup>53</sup>Blassingame, p. 131.

Generally, however, he expressed his resentment in rebellious language in the quarters. 54

The slave preacher, who was in the midst of it all, had to boldly minister to the numerous presenting problems in the quarters, and, on Sunday mornings, he would bellow out with conviction and power that God is able! Jesus will make a way out of no way! There is a balm in Gilead! and Bless those who despitefully use you and hurt you to his congregation. White people were not always the problem; sometimes the enemy or tyrant was the slave's own Iness, a fellow slave, a relative, or an acquaintance in the same quarter.

Not all of the slaves were religious, or saw the need to attend worship services. Some of them had no use for religion, preachers, God or the bible; thus they dealt with life as it come. Nevertheless, a few slaves did change their minds during a crisis or a tragedy.

By and large the preacher represented a religion which was healing and an asset in the mental health of the slave community. Blassingame amplifies this reality with these comments:

Religious faith gave an ultimate purpose to the slave's life, a sense of communal fellowship and personal worth, and reduced suffering from fear and anxiety. In short, religion helped him/her to preserve his/her mental

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Ibid., p. 315.

health. Trust in God was conducive to psychic health insofar as it excluded all anxiety-producing pre-occupation by the recognition of a living Providence. 55

The slave preacher had a colleague in the North known as the denominational black preacher. These ministerial personalities merged when Plantation slavery "officially" ended in the late nineteenth century. The Black preacher of the North was tied originally to the white institutional church, until he got fed up with social discrimination and segregation in the sacred walls and proceeded to establish his own churches.

The communal character of the Black church was greatly influenced by African traits. The next few pages will focus on the Black Preacher's ministry among "free" black people in relation to mental health issues and the presence of African influence.

When we examine the Black Preacher in the North, we are attracted by his desire to use the name of Africa as a symbol of ministry. The first recorded example was the Free African Society which burst forth out of the minds of the Reverends Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, William White and Doris Jennings who left the segregated practices of St. George Methodist Church in Philadelphia, on a fateful Sunday

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Ibid., p. 311.

in November 1, 1787.<sup>56</sup> They were tired of the limitations and hypocrisy of that particular white church. Although they disassociated themselves with St. George Church, they still maintained membership with the Methodist Church in America and Europe.

The use of Africa as a name was appropriated because of the community emphasis perpetuated by the originators. The basis program of the Free African Society was a self-improvement Association which was designed to provide mutual aid in times of misfortune, and to exercise a kind of moral oversight over its membership by visitation and prayer.<sup>57</sup> The kinship model of caring for others found expression in the operational thrust of the Free African Society.

These Black Preachers tried to guide their brothers and sisters in Philadelphia and elsewhere to see the importance of having a mode of behavior which illuminated a sense of somebodyness rather than a sense of nobodyness. Black folks were constantly reminded through the established religious order, political system and economic structure that their personhood was not equal to white folks. As it so often happened, some black people did integrate social

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<sup>56</sup>C. Eric Lincoln, "The Black Church and Christian Liberty" A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review 93 (October 1981), 3.

<sup>57</sup>  
Ibid.

negativism into their personality and value system and hence unsavory activities and sometimes destructive results occurred that made Black life in the community stressful and dangerous. The Free African Society under the leadership of Allen and Jones responded to this condition by aligning with moral and social reform organizations that focused on improving the quality of life of the general public and in particular black people.<sup>58</sup>

The morality issue was an item of utmost concern in the thinking of Allen, Jones and other brethren. How they dealt with this concern found fruition in 1809, in which time they created the "Society for the Suppression of Vice and Immorality," an organization whose members pledged to supervise morals in the black community.<sup>59</sup> The leaders of the new group singled out the use of liquor as a particular loathsome and harmful practice and championed the cause of total abstinence.<sup>60</sup> In addition, these men felt just as strongly as the white men who organized the American Temperance Society in 1826, and they proceeded to sponsor a Black predecessor to that group.<sup>61</sup>

The health factor was also on Richard Allen and

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<sup>58</sup> Carol V. R. George, Segregated Sabbaths, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 127.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.      <sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

Absalom Jones' agenda since they had cooperated on other occasions where epidemics and natural crises were prominent. Harry Richardson captures their sensitivity in this area by revealing an incident that occurred in 1793.

There was a terrible yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia which killed hundreds. Richard Allen and Absalom Jones responded heroically by tending to the sick, burying the dead and rendering all possible service to the victims, most of whom were white. They were comprehended by the mayor of city for their work. 62

When Allen and Jones had performed this noble act the Free African Society had expanded into two growing denominations: The African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Episcopal Church. Subsequently, the early marks of the Black Church saw mental health and health care of the people being genuine forms of the Christian ministry. Allen and Jones did respond to the physical and emotional needs of others in a crisis context.

The Emergence of the Black Church out of the Free African Society was of immense importance to black people at that time. How this was so found expression in the words of Eric Lincoln:

The Black Church began as a religious society, but it was more than that. It was Black people's government, as well as social club, espionage system, political party and impetus for revolution. It provided the counterpart of the important social institutions they had known and participated in the African culture from which they had

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<sup>62</sup>Richardson, p. 43-76.

been separated. Under its umbrellas were the rites of passage from puberty to adulthood, from singleness to marriage, from life to death. The church sponsored the communal meal, the ritual of sacrificial togetherness. 63

The value of the church, or stated by Lincoln, clearly justified the black preacher's sensitivity and involvement with social problems that had a negative and crippling influence on black life in the community.

The splendid example of the Reverends Allen and Absalom Jones was not an isolated occurrence on the stage of Black religion but rather their advocacy reached into other black denominations. In 1831, the same year that Bishop Richard Allen died and fifteen years after the death of Rev. Absalom Jones marked the accelerated effort of black churches in the area of alcoholism in the community. Dr. Andrew A. Sorensen wrote that "in the fall of 1831 the New York City Temperance Society signed up thirty-nine pledges at the First Colored Presbyterian Church, forty at the Abyssinian Baptist Church and one hundred nineteen at the Zion Methodist Church." 64 These three denominations, along with Allen and Jones' denominations played a vital role in the freedom movement of black people in the eighteen and nineteen centuries. 65

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<sup>63</sup>Lincoln, p. 7.

<sup>64</sup>Andrew A. Sorensen, "Alcoholism Among Black Americans" (1970), p. 3.

<sup>65</sup>Wilmore, p. 103-105.

Freedom in this situation meant not only social/economic/political justice and equality from an external perspective but also from an internal perspective in which black people had to free themselves from those behaviors and attitudes that weakened their bodies, minds and moral fibers. Many black preachers knew that their people had to be fitted to successfully overcome the pressures of racism. A person could not strive toward freedom when he or she was enslaved to alcohol.

The Temperance Movement in the 1830's also drawn the support of Rev. Henry Highland Garnet, an extremely popular black Presbyterian minister and descendent of an American Chief from the Mandingo tribe in Western Africa,<sup>66</sup> because it focused on making black people better able to struggle for freedom and upgrade the quality of life in the community. Earl Ofari, wrote that

"in the 1830s a number of temperance societies had been organized within the Northern black communities...Their goal was the elimination of alcohol consumption among blacks. Temperance advocates considered alcohol to be one of the chief causes for idleness, crime, family neglect and other undesirable behavior. These traits, they believed, contributed to white's adverse stereotypes of blacks." <sup>67</sup>

The Temperance cause related to the Abolitionist

<sup>66</sup> Henry J. Young, Major Black Religious Leaders, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977), p. 85.

<sup>67</sup> Earl Ofari, Let Your Motto Be Resistance - The Life And Thought of Henry Highland Garnet (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 27.



Movement (Garnet also supported) because its emphasis on the sober state of the human mind. Rev. Garnet and others knew that an intoxicated person would be ineffectual when it came to developing a plan or strategy for liberation. As Ofari so adaptly states, "Temperance thus became solidly linked with the freedom struggle."<sup>68</sup>

Garnet saw the inseparable link between the Black freedom struggle and the Temperance Movement during the 1830s and 1840s. He often lectured on the connection of the Temperance Movement and the struggle for black rights. He was a member of several temperance societies.<sup>69</sup> In July 1846, he delivered the main address at a meeting of the Delevan Temperance Union, held at Poughkeepsie, New York. He told the audience that black self-improvement depended on alert thought:

Men and women, descendents of Africa, our ancestors were distinguished for their wisdom in the arts and sciences. If you would imitate their good example-if you would find the lost pearl which they treasured up for their children, you must be strangers to this intoxicating cup; for intemperance stupefies the mind and mars its beauty. <sup>70</sup>

He spoke with some much tenacity and insight on this theme that the Daughters of Temperance in November 1848 in Philidelphia, hailed him as "the Apostle of liberty and temperance."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 28

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.      <sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

In conclusion Garnet and other black preachers in the North and South were shining examples of the Christian ministry which saw the Black Church Freedom Movement embracing the mental health and health care aspects of black people. They preached about a theology of resistance that urged their people to depend on God for the spiritual and physical liberation in their lives. All forms of slavery were wrong because it contradicted God's purpose and plan for His ebony children. Anything which came between God and them and communal development and health must be eliminated. Alcohol did fall into this category. Carter C. Woodson wrote the importance of church saving people for service in this world.

If people are to be saved, they must be saved for service, not merely for their refuge at the last hour. If church, then, must not let a person Destroy himself or herself and accept him/her when he/she is no longer useful because of the loss of physical and mental power through depravity, but by preaching the Gospel of Prevention it must save a person from himself/herself. 72

These words by Woodson beautifully interpreted the lives of the slave preacher and Northern Black Denominational preacher whose various ministries tried to save black people from the enslaving conditions which negated the influence of the Almighty in their lives.

Black people's quest for freedom and community mental health maintained constant realities as institutionalized

<sup>72</sup>Carter G. Woodson, The History of the Negro Church (Washington: Associated Press, 1951), p. 249-250.

slavery disappeared and the nation as a whole came of age in the twentieth century, is the basis of the next chapter. The socioeconomic, political and technological changes of the urban scene did present demands, opportunities and problems which profoundly shaped, deformed and transformed black life.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE CONTEMPORARY PROFILE OF BLACK LIFE IN THE URBAN CONTEXT

An orator said, speak to us of Freedom. And he answered:  
 At the city gate and by your fireside I have seen you prostrate yourself and worship your own freedom, Even as slaves humble themselves before a tyrant and praise him though he slays them. Ay, in the grove of the temple and in the shadow of the citadel I have seen the freest among you wear their freedom as a yoke and a handcuff...You shall be free indeed when your days are not without a care nor your rights without a want and a grief,  
 But rather when these things girdle your life and yet you rise above them naked and unbound. <sup>1</sup>

Two suddenly move from slavery time (1700s to 1865) to the contemporary period (1920s to the present) in accordance with black life in America is a bold leap. The period between 1868 to 1920s was difficult and challenging for black people across the country. The white establishment in the South and North did very little to guarantee first class citizenship among black people. The unbridled expression of white violence was apparent in glaring dimensions. The magnitude of black suffering was caught by Staten W. Webster who wrote that:

The form of lynching was used to keep the Black person in his/her place of second-class citizenship. Ginzberg (1969) has pointed out that over 5,000 Blacks have been lynched in the history of this country. The period of time between 1880 to 1900 was an extremely bloody one. He reports that there was an average of 150 lynchings

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<sup>1</sup>Poem by Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet, (New York: 1951), p. 51-52.

Blacks per year during the period 1882-1901. In 1892 some 231 Blacks were lynched. To this day, not one white has been sentenced to death as punishment in an incident in which a Black was murdered. <sup>2</sup>

Each lynching incident had a devastating effect on the victim's family and friends as well as the community at large, whether in the south or north. Numerous black communities had to overcome the senseless and brutal murders of their young and old residents.

There were a host of voices which endeavored to guide the black community of America in areas of freedom, hope and somebodyness. A brief look at a few of these individuals would be valuable at this juncture. Just prior to the 1900s, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, of the A.M.E. Church was a strong advocater of going back to Africa and embracing a Black Theology which gave meaning and power to black people's religious outlook on life. He did generate some support among black people, but the masses were too entrenched in this country's culture and socioeconomic soil to venture to another continent.

Some other prominent leaders such as W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington felt that black people could make it in this country. Thus the early 1900s, these individuals presented their methods of race progress to their beleaguered

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<sup>2</sup>Staten W. Webster, The Education of Black Americans (New York: 1974), p. 19-20. See primary source: Ralph Ginzberg, One Hundred Years of Lynchings (New York: Lancer Books, 1969).

people. It was well documented that DuBois and Washington were not the best of friends or in accord with the best way of improving black people's circumstances in America. DuBois was the intellectual with a Ph.D. from Harvard, who envisioned the Talent Tenth of the race as the foundational impetus for community advancement and progress in America. On the other hand, Booker T. Washington, with lesser academic education, saw the road of vocational skills as the avenue for economic growth in the black community.<sup>3</sup> Both men had valid plans for uplifting their people.

(National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) NAACP, came into being in 1909, with the able assistance of W.E.B. DuBois and other social activists during a dangerous period of Black life. This organization played a crucial role in fighting for minority civic rights through the legal system.<sup>4</sup> Black people were no longer void of juridical advocacy in the country; they could at least employ the NAACP to plead their cases to an often times insensitive legal system.

However, the hopes of black people were further heightened by the presence of Marcus Manassah Garvey, a native of the West Indies, who started in New York (1916), a mass movement which became the United Negro Improvement Association.<sup>5</sup> He was truly a remarkable individual, who

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<sup>3</sup>Webster, p. 22

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 23

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

possessed the oratory power and organizational skills to arouse and motivate a great number of lower socioeconomic level black people to see themselves in a positive and creative light. He developed a broad base form of community mental health in that he gave people direction, hope, power, and self-esteem when social upheaval was alive and well in the land. He started a number of economic ventures, among which was a steamship line.<sup>6</sup> In addition, his organization sponsored huge parades in black communities across the country, which instilled pride and a spirit of somebodiness in the participants and the observers.

In 1923, he became embroiled with legal matters which led to conviction and imprisonment for several years and deported in 1927 after President Coolidge commuted his sentence. He died in London in 1940.<sup>7</sup> His departure from the country in the late 1920s did not diminish what he did for masses of black people in the urban setting. His organization soon became a thing of the past, but his goal of racial dignity did not die. In the hearts of countless black people were Marcus Garvey's eloquent words, "One God! One Aim! One Destiny!"<sup>8</sup> In a time of racial bias, bigotry, and violence, his words offered inspiration and hope for

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 27

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>John Henrik Clarke, "Introduction", and Amy Jacques Garvey, Garvey and Garveyism (London Collier Books, 1963), p. 74.

black people in America.

Much more could be said on the subject, but the above information gives us a glimpse at the early challenges of urban life for black people. Clearly, the pilgrimage of black people in this country involved certain continued themes such as oppression, freedom, discrimination, injustice and justice which are prominent at any point of history. And how black people have reacted, endured, rejoiced, coped and suffered in their environment can be discernable by carefully investigating their community life. The reality of urban life has tested black people to the very fiber of their being and their responses in this context have established the basis of this chapter.

#### A. URBAN LIFE: THE TENSION BETWEEN THE PROMISED LAND AND PLANTATION LIFE

The notion of the Promised land was instilled in Black people who attended church on Sunday mornings and heard the spirit-filled sermons of the Preacher. The Promised Land was (is) a biblical theme which depicted the journey of the Hebrew children who left Egypt (The oppressive land) for Canaan (the Promised Land) under the watchful eyes of the Almighty. The story is told, the Hebrew children finally made it to Canaan after wandering around the wilderness for forty years. A trip which ordinarily would have taken six weeks, was greatly prolonged due to the people's dis-



obedience and rebellion Toward God.

The level of faith and obedience of Black people in regard to their version of the Promised Land is difficult to learn and likewise hard to document as historical fact. However, the "Promised Land" as a socioeconomic reality did find expression in the lives of countless number of black people who resided in the south and their impulse to leave reached high intensity when World War II (1941-1945) occurred in America. The Promised Land encompassed the North, East and the West Coast. These locations were known for their industrial cities and opportunities for jobs, decent housing and education, and leisure time were publicized. Unfortunately, the struggles of the earlier black folks who followed Reverends, Allen, Jones, Varick and Garnet did not vanish over the years. The bigotry, jealousy and hatred which found hideous expressions in the south appeared in the North, East Coast and the West Coast for Black people. To be under racial hostility and anger forced many Black people to guard their thoughts and carefully examine every opportunity presented to them.

Urban life is a defeat for some and a triumph for others. Brick buildings, paved streets, union jobs, parks, zoos, automobiles and high buildings are a few external trappings in the urban scene. To master one's destiny and to achieve success are desired goals of most people, especially black people. Needless to say, their goals are

not without cost and obstacle. The social structures of urban life are not always set up for easy entrance by Black people. Often times, through de-jure segregation and institutionalized racism, the re-creation of "Plantation life" appears in the urban or inner city setting. Thus black people have to live in a tension reality that sees them constantly endeavoring to make the dreams of Promise come true while living in an oppressive condition.

1. The Institutional Black Church vs. Social Systems of Discrimination and Disenfranchisement

The first large migration of black people to the North was prompted by the United States involvement in World War I (or previously stated). The Defense Department and civil government accelerated the need of citizens to functions as soldiers, war volunteers, laborers and workers to work in the factories and plants. Thus, many black people who were fed up with racial violence and segregation in the south struck out for the North and East coast where a "better life was possible."

Unfortunately, black people quickly realized from testimonies of relatives and friends who were already in the supposed "Promised land" that "a person's skin color made a difference." They were confronted with what, Norman Coombs, called "the new Racism," wherein the legal system literature and arts, and company's policies were designed to demean

and degrade the black personality."<sup>9</sup>

The southern white unabashedly hated the black person, white his/her northern counterpart through "scientific findings," humor, and institutional policy expressed similar feelings toward the black person. The cruel reality of what has been stated, is seen in the words of Coombs:

Both the Northern press and the genteel literary magazines contained the same vulgar image of the Negro (The 1920-1960s name For Black People-mine emphasis) which was to be found in openly racist communities in the south. Whether he appeared in new articles, editorials, cartoons, or works of fiction, he was universally portrayed as superstitious, stupid, lazy, happy-go-lucky, a liar, a thief, and a drunkard. He loved fun, clothes and trinkets as well as chickens, watermelons and sweet potatoes. 10

If this disheartening reality was not enough, Dr. Coombs, further states that "news stories and editorials referred to Negroes in slanderous terms without any apparent sense of embarrassment. Phrases like 'barbarian', 'negro ruffian', 'African Anne', 'colored cannibal', 'coon', and 'darkie' were standard epithets. And cartoons depicted blacks as having thick lips, flat nose, big ears, big feet, and kinky woolly hair." 11

This is by no means the sum total of abuse and scorn

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<sup>9</sup>Norman Coombs, The Black Experience In America (New York: Hippocrane Books, 1972), p. 95-100.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

heap on black people by countless number of misguided and sick white people. Of course, not all white people felt this way, but enough did which established the national posture and disposition concerning the often used phrase "the negro problem in America."

Naturally, under this type of social stigmatism, black people had to deal with self hatred, aggression, depression, and a sense of nobodiness. Along with their intrapsychic problems, black people had to worry about dwelling locations. They were forced to live in certain areas in the northern cities because of discriminatory housing patterns and outright white hostility against them.

Whenever black people would appear in an area, white people would sometimes sell their homes, businesses, and churches and quickly leave for "purer" surroundings. Social discrimination and disenfranchisement were affected enough to keep the majority of black people in specific locations in the city. The common geographical names, prior to the 1960s, were slum, nigger town, coon country, African land and ghetto. You could take your pick of names. The underlying reality was constant, black folks experienced much trouble in the north and elsewhere.

The church stood out as a beaming hope for Black people who had to overcome the crushing realities of urban city life. On Sunday morning, black people would attend the various churches in the areas, and experience strength and

power to tackle the challenges of the upcoming week. In addition while in the church, they were somebody and their spirits were regenerated and revitalized.

The church of the urban scene did encourage and uplift its people who continuously battled for fairness in corrupted social systems. Sometimes, however, the pressures and "free" life styles of the city were contributory factors that weakened the black family structure. E. Franklin Frazier brings out that some black people experienced the disorganization of their families through divorce, spouse abuse, spouse abandonment, illegitimate children and juvenile delinquency.<sup>12</sup> There were no easy or quick solutions forthcoming by many black churches because of their doctrinal teachings which condemned those who were guilty of fornication (sex outside of marriage), adultery, alcoholism and stealing. Thus, the black churches as a whole did not develop community counseling centers, youth centers or battered spouse facilities.

Some black people felt that the black church's conservative doctrinal posture was not relevant enough, so they sought the financial and political assistance of the NAACP, the Masons, college fraternities and sororities, social clubs and other grassroot groups to bring about some

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<sup>12</sup>E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Church in America (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 1963), p. 53.

community changes. Although these groups and organizations were used, black people in general still relied on their churches to give spiritual, emotional and material supports during good and bad times. Without the church, the condition of black people would have been much worse in the urban setting. The church functioned as a refuge, hospital, and gas station for black people who had bruised souls and empty spirits.

## 2. The Social Conflict: The Haves and the Have Nots

Some writers of the black community and church have devoted most of their discussion on the social pressures which came to Black people. It is like black people received most or all of their negative experiences from white people, or conditions that are outside their influence. There is no doubt that discrimination, segregation and institutionalized racism have marred black folks' spirits. History bears the rightness of this assumption. Concurrently, another essential factor is prevalent within the black experience known as social classism. It is as old as slavery, and, as new as today's Los Angeles newspaper.

The sociologists place racial groups into three classes, lower, middle and upper. In addition, they also divided the three classes into subgroups or classes such as lower-lower, lower-middle, middle high and upper lower. They go on to describe various social stratifications which make

up the statuses and orders within the cultural group. Black people are no different from any other racial group which has various classes and subgroups within its whole.

History confirms the differences among black people as far back as Africa and during slavery. In Africa there were tribes such as the Ashanti, Mandingo, Ewe, Ibo and Yoruba, to name a few. The harsh realities of slavery also produced different class distinctions. On the Plantation, black folks were classified as house servants, coppers, blacksmiths, butchers, water boys, overseers and field servants. On a more graphic-note, the late Malcom X would often describe black people as either house niggers or field niggers. In his eyes, a house nigger was an Uncle Tom and racial compromiser and a field nigger was a fighter, a liberator and a non-compromiser when it came to selling out his/her people. He believed that unity was prevented because the house niggers would work against the field niggers in relation to freedom. He described himself a field nigger.<sup>13</sup> Malcolm X's analysis included all blacks in the country.

Now, in the North, preferably, where Reverends Allen, Jones and others resided, there were free negroes (those who never were slaves), freed negroes (those who became free from bondage or slavery) and negro slaveowners. And from these

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John H. Clarke, (ed.) Malcolm X, The Man and His Times New York: Collier Books, 1969), p. 276-279.

categories sprung forth, skilled and unskilled negroes or blacks. Subsequently, black people in the past were not a homogeneous group, especially along the socioeconomic lines.

The urban context is no different. Harold Cruse's book, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, Douglas G. Glasgow's book, The Black Underclass, and Nathan Hare's book, The Black Anglo Saxon, are illuminating studies which showed the social and cultural differences of black people. There are social tensions and conflicts among blacks. Social status, education, and economic buying power are major determinants in grasping the psychological reasons behind black disunity in the community.

In spite of social discrimination and segregation, many black people have made significant gains in the working world. Some of them have courageous legacies of parents and grandparents who bore the hardships of their times and obtained self-respect from honest work, education, money and accumulative property(ies) some of whom did not achieve a high school education, but yet they instilled the "learning desire" in their children who made the dream come true. These children went on to achieve bachelors, masters and doctorates at Black Colleges, universities, seminaries and divinity schools across the country.

On the other hand, some black people have never wanted too much and seemed to be happy with the bare essentials of life. They are classified in sociological terms as "your



have NOTS." A conservative view of the Black have NOTS would include, little formal education, lowpaying job, or NO job at all, or fall with the social welfare syndrome: "single parents and poor, high school dropouts, drugheads, bottle boozers, or a parasitic personality."<sup>14</sup>

Crime plays a major role in dictating how many black people relate to each other. Certain areas of a typical inner city do carry negative labels which influence the way persons from the outside tend to view those who reside in these settings. Many law-abiding and responsible citizens are unjustly identified as being deprived or potentially irresponsible because of their home addresses which represented an unsafe area.

For instance, South-Central Los Angeles, which has a heavy concentration of black people whose living standard encompass low income to middle income, is known as a crime related location in the city. This reality was shown in the following statistical data:

The Los Angeles Police department's 1983 crime figures show that the South Central area reports more than twice as many serious crimes as any other area of the city: 336 murders, 849 rapes, 7,528 aggravated assaults, 9,446 robberies. <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Harold Cruse, The Crises of the Negro Intellectuals. (New York: Morrow, 1967), p. 347-420; Douglas G. Glasgow, The Black Underclass, (New York: Vintage Press, 1981) Chapters 3 thru 6.

<sup>15</sup>Grace Trejo, "South-Central L. A. Fights Crime Itself" Los Angeles Times (November 23, 1984), Part II, p.6.

These figures are glaring remainders that many black people are extremely curious and afraid of each other, especially when some of them are dressed like thugs (dirty or shabby clothings and carrying something in their hands which resembled a knife, revolver, stick, or bottle).

In many black neighborhoods, residents have installed iron bars on doors and windows for personal protection. They want to keep the bad blacks out of their homes. Furthermore, they want more police presence in their area because of youth gang problem, and other criminal acts which produced family and street violence, drug abuse, suicide and homicide.

The tragedy of black crime engulf the emotions and fears of the haves and have nots. In other words, black people in general do see the detrimental consequences of this continual wave of killings and other violent acts in urban America. An illustration of Black concern was seen in the Los Angeles Times in which James Baldwin, the well known author, went to South-Central Los Angeles to speak at the A. C. Bilbrew Library, where he was to be honored as part of the Black History Month.<sup>16</sup> Approximately twelve hours earlier, another shooting had claimed a young man in the area. This victim, an unidentified 26 year old black male, was discovered bleeding, face down, in the 600 block of 94th

<sup>16</sup> Steven R. Churm, "Black Author's Day in L. A. Marred by Another Killing," Los Angeles Times (February 25, 1985) Part I, p. 1.

Street.<sup>17</sup> When James Baldwin heard of the death, he profoundly stated that "it is no different today than it was 25 years ago."<sup>18</sup> In other words, from 1960 to 1985 he has witnessed or heard the same senseless loss of life in many urban communities in America. He went on to elaborate on the conflict and peril of black life:

This kind of killing is going on in the ghettos, the projects, and all across poor, urban America...Life in the inner city is still so CLAUSTROPHOBIC-the unemployed, the addicts, the bored and frustrated continued to prey on each other striking out for attention. Los Angeles is no different. WE JUST CANNOT SEEM TO STOP IT." <sup>19</sup>

Baldwin's words are chilling and provocative in his assessment of social disharmony and discord among groups in urban black America. The Black church is not immune to the realities of social differences among its people.

While the writer attended the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley, he had the marvelous opportunity to work at Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, California, for three and a half years. (The time included 1972-1975). In Oakland, black people comprised around 40% percent of the population. Needless to say this figure was not homogeneous, but rather heterogeneous. Black people were classified as Flatland persons or Hill persons, depending on house location, education, money and social graces. These

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.    <sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

groups were not always friendly toward each other. The writer experienced the conflicts and classism between these two social groups. Allen Temple Baptist Church membership reflected the class distinction, but yet the church endeavored to build net works of peoplehood. The task of the church was not easy but positive gains were achieved through the efforts of its pastor, Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr. and other enlightened brothers and sisters in the congregation.

The church is biblically described as the body of Christ (SOMA TOU CHRISTOS in Greek), but actually reaching such a lofty reality is an ongoing goal for most Christian churches, including the Black Church. The church is usually made up of people who share similar, social, economic, and cultural interests.

The evidences do show the presence of various class churches in the black community. For instance, Frazier devoted a section on "The Religion of the New Middle Class," in his book, in which time he argued that black people do join and participate in church which best reflect their own social status."<sup>20</sup> The most educated blacks attended the Presbyterian, Congregational and Episcopal Churches, and Baptist and Methodist churches are also included when the pastoral leadership is trained and well educated for the

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Frazier, p. 81-83.

ministry.<sup>21</sup> Another scholar, Mitchell has on a number of occasions, described the Black Church in sociological categories: "the mass church consists of grassroot and lower class blacks, with a sprinkle of middle class and the high church consists of middle and upper middle class blacks."<sup>22</sup> He further emphasized that "the black cultural church has an Afro American religious character in its worship and service model."<sup>23</sup> The mass church and the high church could be classified as a cultural oriented structure if they reflect the rich Afro-American experience.

Rev. Jesse Jackson has uniquely influenced black life in America. His candidacy emphasized a tremendous outflow of pride and dignity among urban and rural blacks in particular. He attempted to bring the Haves and Have Nots together to form a significant political movement. How he did it, is a powerful testimony which speaks to Community Mental Health.

#### B. THE REV. JESSE JACKSON'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY: HOPE IN THE MIDST OF TENSION

On November 7, 1984, the major newspaper across the country printed the smashing victory of President Ronald

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 83-84.

<sup>22</sup>Henry Mitchell, Black Belief (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1975) and Floyd Massey, Jr. and Samuel McKinney, Church Administration in the Black Perspective (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1976).

<sup>23</sup>Personal Conversations with Dr. Henry Mitchell during a span of four years (1977-1981).

Reagan over his democratic challenger, Fritz Mondale. Reagan won by a high majority, over 16,000,000 popular votes and over 500 electoral college votes, took 48 states out of 50 states, to triumphantly start a second term. Those who supported Reagan were elated and those who supported Mondale and Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro, the first female vice presidential candidate of a major party in American history, were saddened. One of those who represented the supported team was Jackson who made history himself, even in defeat.

The section will examine Jackson's impact as a major party presidential candidate during the primaries and a voice of hope and pride for black America. His presence during the 1984 presidential year will truly be noted in future books on politics, cultural sociology, and religion. The purpose of this section entitled: "The Rev. Jesse Jackson's Presidential Candidacy: Hope in the midst of tension" is to generally explore how he generated a political potency image for blacks and other minorities across the country. The emphasis is not an analysis of the social evils of urban life which are well documented in other blacks and white sources, but rather a theme of empowerment is the main focal point of this section. We will observe this occurrence on two levels: 1) The Forerunners: Those who set the stage for the popular grassroot's statement, "Run Jesse Run" to be realized and finally 2) boldness, conflict and reconciliation, which encompass the major theme of his candidacy.

# 1. The Forerunners

When we trace the political persuasion of black people, we see that they have basically been members of the two party system of the country. Even, during the periods of slavery and segregation, black people, whenever they were able to register and vote supported individuals who exhibited strong inkings toward justice, equality and political sensitivity to the plight of the poor and destitute. Historically, when President Abraham Lincoln, although he was skeptical about the move, penned his signature on the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, marked a black political movement into the Republican camp. For a brief period (1863-1900) black people dared to dream about justice and equality in a country which by and large mistreated them.

This period was known as The Reconstruction Era, in which blacks or negroes at that time, held local, state and government positions. Norman Coombs gives us significant highlights of this period:

During Reconstruction blacks played a significant role throughout the South. Besides voting a large numbers, they were elected to local, state, and federal offices. Between 1869 and 1901, two became U. S. Senators and twenty were members of the House of Representatives. Senators Revel and Bruce were elected from Mississippi. P.B.S. Pinchback was elected to the Senate from Louisiana, but he was not permitted to take his seat. He did serve as Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana, and, for three days, was acting Governor. 24

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<sup>24</sup> Coombs, p. 90.

Coombs failed to mention a historical event which occurred in 1888, the appearance of the first black person to enter the presidential arena. Rev. Frederick Douglass, ex slave, licensed African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church minister and a Great American Orator, was a candidate at the Republican Convention. He won a single, complimentary vote at the Convention.<sup>25</sup> The lack of voting power was not the principle impact, the idea of Frederick Douglass offering his name for the highest office in the land was a statement of personhood, faith, and racial pride.

From Douglass' bold venture to the early 1930s, black people generally remained Republicans. Of course, some of them were Democrats during this period. The situation did change for Black America as well as the country at large, when the Great Depression struck in the latter 1920s. The nation was in the grips of economic disaster. The general public had to tighten their belts and for black folks, who were at the bottom, they had to struggle to keep body and soul intact. The entrance of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor Roosevelt of the Democratic Party in 1932 marked a new beginning and hope for American people. Thus black people in large numbers changed their allegiance to the Democratic Party and help to elect Mr. Roosevelt for four terms in the White House. They saw constructive and use-

<sup>25</sup>"Pride and Prejudice" Times 123:19, (May 7, 1984), p. 37.



ful governmental programs meeting their social, health, employment and educational needs.

Presently, no major movement has occurred by black people away from the Democratic arena. (Some black political activists feel that this allegiance is detrimental to black progress. Time is the best indicator). Three other black persons have ran for the presidential office prior to Rev. Jesse Jackson. Only one, Congresswoman Shirley Chrisolm has ran for the Democratic nomination in 1972. The other two, Dick Gregory, a human right activist, ran as an independent in 1968 and received no delegate vote and Eldridge Clever, a churchman and former Black Panther leader, ran as a Peace and Freedom candidate in 1972 and received no delegate vote. The opposite was true for Congresswoman Chrisolm who won 152 delegates <sup>26</sup> and were credited to her at the Democratic Convention during the same year.

These courageous individuals, previously mentioned, were forerunners for many others to venture into the deep water of political gains and progress. With the tremendous years of the Civil Rights Movement, black people learned how their unity can generate political power on the local, county, state and federal levels. The following statistics bear out this reality. Between 1982 and 1983 according to

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

the Joint Center for Political Studies, the number of black elected officials increased by 8.6 percent (from 5,160 to 5,606). This was the Center said, "the sharpest increase since 1976 and one of the largest numerical increases in the past ten years."<sup>27</sup> Out of this number, there are twenty-one congressional representatives and many more state representatives and mayors. Some of these mayors are in charge of prominent cities in America. To cite a few examples, Thomas Bradley is mayor of Los Angeles, Harold Washington is mayor of Chicago, Wilson Goode is mayor of Philadelphia, Coleman Young is mayor of Detroit and Rev. Andrew Young is mayor of Atlanta. These men are competent and endeavoring to serve whole populations of their cities.

Clearly black people in large numbers have learned to vote for competent individuals within the race. This does not exclude them from supporting non-blacks who have demonstrated political fairness, competent and justice. For instance, Supervisor Kenneth Hahn of the Los Angeles County, who is a white man on November 6, 1984, successfully won an unprecedented ninth term in office. He has served in an area which has predominately black population. Time and time again, he has handley defeated white and black opponents, because of his achievements and geniune interest to service

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<sup>27</sup>Lerone Bennett, Jr. "Introduction" Ebony 39:10 (August 1984), p. 36.

the community. As an entree into the final section, boldness, conflict and reconciliation, a brief case study of Harold Washington's victory as mayor of Chicago, which is Rev. Jackson's program base, will undeniably set the value of the forerunners in his quest for the presidency for 1984.

#### THE CHICAGO MAYOR ELECTION OF 1983 - A CASE STUDY

On the front cover of the Newsweek, dated April 11, 1983, a picture of Harold Washington of Chicago was seen. The significance lies in the fact that he was the first black man to represent the Democratic party in the upcoming mayoral election. The impact of such a statement was the reality that race represented the attitudes, emotions and beliefs of Blacks, Whites, Latinos, Jews and Orientals in regard to Harold Washington and The G.O.P. candidate Bernard Eptons. The pigmentation of a man's skin became a paramount issue in the election. Racial tension, fear, hostility and pride were felt throughout the city of Chicago. A sense of bipolarity was presented in the city and the citizens were deeply concerned about the consequences of such an explosive situation.

Mr Harold Washington, who rallied over 95 per cent of the black community voters behind him during the primary, had inflamed many traditional democratic ethnic groups. Many of whom became psychologically disturbed and fearful because of the possibility of a black man rising to the status of

mayor.

An amazing phenomena did take place as the election date fast, approached, black people across the nation identified with Harold Washington. Somewhat of an unknown outside of Chicago in January 1983, thus three months later, he had become a symbol of hope, pride, courage and strength for Black America. There is something with black people that seems to connect them together in times of challenge. I felt close to Washington on two levels. First, he was a black man and this identification manifested within me excitement and hope in the possibility of him making it. Secondly, a common spirit of rebellion against the forces which endeavored to discredit him. These two reasons were based on a common history of oppression, hardship and discrimination. There is a psychic bond within the black situation that appears whenever a movement towards social betterment and political power are attempted.

Harold Washington has won the election for Mayor of Chicago, which is the second largest city in America. The vote was extremely close analysts or vote experts claimed that the racial factor was prominent. Washington took 97% of the black vote, 59 per cent of the Latins and 18% of the white vote.<sup>28</sup> Only 45,000 votes separated the candidates.

<sup>28</sup> Lee May and Larry Green, "Washington Issue Call For Chicagoans to Unify" Los Angeles Times, (April 14, 1983), Part I, p. 17.

Now the issue of healing is crucial in the city of Chicago.

For the healing to begin, the racial polarities and differences will have to be integrated into a new dynamic social/political system that genuinely respects uniqueness and diversity, yet moves to bring opposite and opposing groups together in a working relationship. (This will not be easy). There will be conflict and pressure in such an effort. Washington experience after the primary to the general election revealed the clear need of a social group individuation process to take hold in Chicago. Continual separation, racial blindness and prejudice will only heighten the possibility of chaos, destruction and death. Dr. Carl Jung stated a similar view, "the more that consciousness is influenced by prejudices, errors, fantasies, and infantile wishes, the more the already existing gap will widen into a neurotic dissociation and lead to a more or less artificial life far removed from healthy instincts, nature, and truth."<sup>29</sup>

Chicago was shocked with the emergency and eventual victory of Harold Washington on April 12, 1983; in order for black people and white people to overcome racism, prejudice and injustice, more similar shocks are needed. This belief is expressed in the words of Dr. Marie Von Franz, a Jungian therapist.

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<sup>29</sup>  
Carl Jung. Man and His Symbols (New York: Dill, 1964), p. 34.

the greatest sin of humankind is unconsciousness and the evil that people do is the result of that intellectual realization is not consciousness, there has to be a full realization with an ethical impact and Shock, and then sometimes the evil does stop, but it must be realization by the whole person. If the Shock is great enough people may cease from evil, but it takes a very bad Shock. 30

Rev. Jackson had played a vital role in helping Harold Washington win the election. On election day, Rev. Jackson and his staff had hundreds of volunteers urging blacks, Latins, Orientals and whites to vote for Mr. Washington. After this great victory, Rev. Jackson received another indicator that the stage might be right for a black presidential candidate. What was possibly going through his mind was the thought, "maybe the person was I." Black people were heavily voting in the Northern urban cities. He was an established leader, and the country needed greater shocks along the lines of domestic and international policies changes. Truly this was a time of hope.

## 2. Boldness, Conflict and Reconciliation

During the middle months of 1983, some black leaders of the NAACP, the Urban League and a few national ministerial groups and organizations were making public statements concerning the need of having a black person(s) testing the

<sup>30</sup> Taken from Charles B. Hanna, The Face Of The Deep. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), p. 99-100. The primary source: Rascher Die Visioner Des Niklaus Von Flue (Zürich: 1959).

political waters in relation to the Presidency. The need was there, but the question of whom was debatable among black leaders across the country. Out of the restlessness sea of black dialogue stood up Rev. Jesse Jackson who finally decided to take the bold step. In November, 1983, he made it official in a rousing speech in front of 3,000 supporters at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, D. C.<sup>31</sup> In his speech, he articulated a note, "Our time has come!," which would be one of the principle themes throughout the hectic months of campaigning.

He also articulated the uniqueness of his campaign as reflecting a Rainbow Coalition which included blacks, whites, reds, browns, women, the poor, the leftouts, the outcasts and the neglected. He believed that the Reagan Administration was insensitive to the urban population because of the hugh cuts in domestic social programs, and the country was dangerously moving toward a nuclear war with the Soviet Union.

On the international front, he spoke out against the nation's oppressive activities in Africa, the middle East, and Latin America. In addition, he did not adhere to a strictly Jewish International posture. In the middle East, he urged the Israeli to begin to have dialogue with the Arabs,

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<sup>31</sup>  
 "What Makes Jesse Run?" Newsweek 92 (November 14, 1983), p. 50.

Palestinians and Syrians in Lebanon and elsewhere. This was another bold step by him.

His frankness and unorthodox international posture were met with criticism and cynicism by top U. S. officials, some black leaders and Jewish leaders in Israel and America. He was not the first black person to run for the Presidential office, but he was the first to urge Israel to change its foreign policy. The pressure was on, and Rev. Jackson was in an extremely hot kitchen of controversy.

The heat of controversy surrounded Jesse Jackson reached a few degrees higher when he boldly succeeded into procuring the release of Lt. Robert Goodman, an officer for the U.S. Navy, whose aircraft was shot down in the Syria controlled area of Lebanon. Jesse's astute and diplomatic timing gave new life and blood to a previously understaffed and under finance campaign. He was hailed for his courage and compassion by some and he was ridiculed and criticized as an international meddler and PIO and Syria sympathizer. However, the general feeling of black people was pride and joy for him because of his noble action. They responded by giving money to his election and volunteered in large numbers to campaign headquarters across the country. Thousands of black people began to envision their political power on the national scene.

Throughout the negotiation in Syria and on the returned flight back to the United States, Rev. Jackson was a



popular media story. Newspapers, television news, and magazines publicized his accomplishment. From this, his campaign took on a great expression of legitimacy. Now, he was a political big leaguer. Now, he had some international experience.

The cloud of conflict and suspicion, however, also floated near and it bursted with thunder and lighting, when he unwisely and casually expressed a negative Jewish word, "Hymie", in an informal interview with a black reporter in New York. By and large, the Jewish Community in America vehemently denounced Jesse's statement and they quickly labeled him an Anti-Semitic personality. Their view of him was further substantiated by inflammatory Jewish comments by minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation, a Black Muslim sect, who uses Chicago as a headquarter. Minister Farrkhan was an ardent supporter of Jackson and he played an important role in the release of Lt. Robert Goodman in Syria.

Some black people were disappointed in Jackson's "Hymie" remark and Farrakhan's constant attacks on Jewish people and their culture. There are two basic reasons for their feelings in this manner. First, black people have a spiritual and experiential connection with Jewish people because of biblical teaching and preaching and the mutuality of historic oppressions and social stigmatism and secondly, during crucial periods of civil rights and human rights, both

parties have been allies and friends in bringing about legislative and political changes in America.

Jackson knew the rich history of black and Jewish relations. And he on a few occasions, apologized to the Jewish community. In addition, after a few months had passed, he distanced himself from Farrakhan. Nevertheless, the political fall out was there, and he really did not completely free himself from the Anti-Semitic label. But black people and the church on the whole stayed with him through the conflict.

Jackson relied heavily on the black clergy and the church and both responded by enabling him to achieve over 425 delegates and amassed over 3,000,000 black votes during the Primary season of 1984.

The statistics are conclusive in showing the value of Black participation in his election. For instance, Time, gave these results under the heading, "Who's Voting For Jesse." Primaries where Jackson received more than 10% of the vote.<sup>32</sup>

<u>States</u>	<u>% of Total Vote</u>	<u>% of Black Vote</u>	<u>% of White Vote</u>
New York	25.5	89	7
Georgia	21.0	70	3
Illinois	20.8	74	4
Alabama	19.4	60	1
Pennsylvania	17.0	74	4
Florida	12.2	62	2
Connecticut	11.8	69	4

<sup>32</sup>"Who's Voting For Jesse", Time, 123:19 (May 7, 1984)

The record is clear. Rev. Jackson could not have achieved political respect without the backing of black people.

This is not to discount his effort to establish a Rainbow Coalition. In an interview which was printed in the Los Angeles Times, Jesse responded to a question concerning the violability of the Coalition with these comments:

I got 15% of the vote in Arizona which is 2% blacks; 15% in Vermont, no blacks; 13.5% in Connecticut, 5% blacks. We've constantly gotten non black votes. The Rainbow Coalition is a more ambitious task than just winning. It's an ambitious goal. A country born where only the landed gentry could vote, and persons of different color couldn't vote, a country where women have their legal rights limited even 1984, is mired racism and sexism. To pool these broken pieces into a new tapestry on Coalition is an ambitious uphill battle, but it's happening. 33

Jackson's words seemed to put in perspective the broad goal of his campaign. But, the reality still showed that the black community and the black church in particular made his base, as well as provided a launching point for greater exposure in other ethnic groups and communities.

The role of the black church can not be over-emphasized. Many clergy persons came on the Jackson's team. They knew that the urban and rural communities needed more social programs not less. Their people in general needed a greater commitment from state and federal agencies in the areas of health and welfare, education and employment-training and

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<sup>33</sup>Robert Scheer, "Jackson: We Must Begin a Dialogue", Los Angeles Times (June 1, 1984), Part I, p. 14.

opportunities. Jackson was a voice in those areas. Ministers were appointed state campaign chairpersons because of their moral appeal in the community and their churches were valuable locations for recruiting volunteers, mass rallies, and fund raisers. The Los Angeles Sentinel, the largest black controlled newspaper in Southern California, rated some of the Los Angeles black clergypersons who financially supported him:

Dr. Thomas Kilgore, pastor of Second Baptist Church, \$10,000; Dr. E. V. Hill, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, \$10,000; Dr. Charles Blake, pastor of West Angeles Church of God in Christ; \$5,000; Rev. James Lawson, pastor of Holman United Methodist Church, \$5,000; Dr. M. C. Williams, pastor of Roger Williams Baptist Church, \$5,000; Dr. Charles Belcher, pastor of Phillips Temple CME church, \$5,000; and Bishop Ralph Houston of Church of God in Christ, \$5,000. 34

On a broader level, the Baptist Ministerial Alliance comprising of 300 pastors and ministers, under the leadership of Frank Higgins promised to raise \$50,000 for the Jackson campaign and T. J. Jemison, President of the 6.6 million member National Baptist Convention, Inc. U.S.A. pledged his total support for Jesse.<sup>35</sup>

Rev. Jackson played an instrumental role in reconciliation in that he urged black folks to work together.

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<sup>34</sup>James H. Cleaver, "Ministers and Politics Mobilize For Jesse" Los Angeles Sentinel, 54:38 (January 12, 1984),A-17.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

He saw the need of the Haves and Haves Nots joining forces for the betterment of all. Earlier in this chapter, the writer mentioned the conflict between the flatland blacks and the professional hill blacks in Oakland, and the efforts of Allen Temple Baptist Church to bring about a greater group unity, within its walls and the community. Well, on November 13, 1983, pastor J. Alfred Smith, Sr., of Allen Temple Baptist Church wrote in the church bulletin, the impact and reconciling influence of Rev. Jackson in Oakland.

My heart is joyous because Allen Temple members raised more money for the campaign expense of the Rev. Jesse Jackson than other Bay Area Churches and secular groups ...Our choirs, ushers, deacons and members were part of the 4,500 people who were seated inside and outside of our facilities to hear this unusual gifted and committed youngman. 36

What Jesse said was not printed, but he surely did not miss the chance of urging unity and oneness of purpose to his listeners.

The Community Mental Health advantages of his campaign were numerous. There are a few worth mentioning. First, children and young people had a positive role model. He exhibited strength, confident, wit and courage. Secondly, they could dream of being President some day in a country whose history spoke differently. Thirdly, black people took pride in having one of their own being introduced as a presidential candidate on numerous occasions. Fourthly, they

<sup>36</sup>He spoke at Allen Temple Baptist Church, Oakland, California on November 6, 1983 (Allen Temple Baptist Church Bulletin) November 13, 1983.

could still hope in the midst of tension in a better day where in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "we shall be judged by the context of our character, not by the color of our skins, are well and alive." And finally the community does have the resources and people power to solve its social problems, such as drug addiction, teenage pregnancy, family abuse, homicide, suicide and functional illiteracy in the urban, and suburban contexts, when the residents believe in themselves first of all and seriously take note of his overarching theme, "Our time has come!"

The Democratic Convention in San Francisco was a glorious experience for many, especially black America. At that time, in the third Wednesday of July 1984, Mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana and Jackson's campaign manager, introduced in front of a viewing audience of millions the Rev. Jesse Jackson, candidate for the office of President of the United States. And, as we know, Rev. Jackson went on to deliver a stirring and powerful reconciling speech which led many to tears. It was truly a positive mental health experience. He endeavored to embrace rich and poor, inside groups and outside groups, black and white, Jews, Catholics and Protestants, and enemy and friend in a spirit of community. The problems are great but people power and commitment can rise to the challenge. Political experts and commentators felt that the Jackson's and Governor Cuomo's of New York speeches were the best at the Convention. However,

the breath and depth of any speech is live through the hearers.

This leads us to the last section of the second chapter, "the 1980s 'Tech' Phenomenon: An Inseparable Reality." Rev. Jackson has been able to skillfully use the media to his advantage. In a brief way, we will examine how technology does influence community life.

#### C. THE 1980's "TECH" PHENOMENON: AN INSEPARABLE REALITY

One of the major lessons we are learning in the 1980s is that technology is becoming increasingly part of our lives. The writer would be remiss if his treatment of Community Mental Health fails to examine the impact of technology in the culture and society. Although this study is unable to investigate in depth on the subject, it will illuminate some issues which are significant to mental health. This section will be divided in two parts: 1) a glimpse at "the tech" phenomenon in the society and finally 2) The Human Mind and Media Programming.

##### 1. A Glimpse at "the Tech" Phenomenon in the Society

The American society is heavily influenced by the incredible things machines and computers are able to do and accomplish in a brief period of time. Our admiration and respect for technology is so high that Time selected the computer as Man of the Year for 1982. In Craig Brad's

penetrating book Techostress, he states some pertinent reasons for this unusual selection, "we idolize the computer's qualities: speed, efficiency, obedience, accuracy, rigidity, and conformity. We're particularly obsessed with speed: fast good, instant information and quick cures."<sup>37</sup> Brad's observation seemed logical since the current trends in the business and other major industries are focused on rapid success, greater productivity with minimal human power and instant facts and figures. Time has never selected a non human as Man of the Year, but the overwhelming presence of the machine can not be denied.

The very language of our age reflects the shaping of technology in the culture. Now we are subjected to such terms as microprocessor, cable, telecommunication, satellite telecommunication, astronaut, star wars, the Jarvike 7 which is the name for an artificial heart, test tube baby and video kids. Other terms and symbols are present, but these names give us an idea of the high degree of communication, achievement and programming which is taking place on a daily basis in the society.

Tremendous achievements have been afforded to the medical field due to the influence of technology. The evidences are conducive in the scientific discoveries and experiments which directly influence human health. In Time

<sup>37</sup>Craig Brad, Techostress (Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1984) p. 14.



there is an extensive article entitled, "Medicine: One Miracle, Many Doubts," which discusses the accomplishments of the medical profession and the attached financial cost. From 1980-84, the medical professions has blended the scientific investigation and technology together to achieve remarkable things in relation to developing, enhancing and prolonging human life. Some people are critical and skeptical in relation to some of the medical experimentations with animals and the recent Baby Fae who was a recipient of a baboon's heart and lived 20 days before her death on November 15, 1984, on Moral grounds.

The general public consensus, however, seems to approve the medical advancements. The frequency of transplants have increased over the last few years. Along with Baby Fae, other noted operations have been Dr. Barney Clark who received the first Jarvik-7 artificial heart and lived 112 days in 1983 before his death due to medical complications and currently Mr. William Schroeder who is the second recipient of the Jarvik-7 artificial heart. The purpose for these historic operations is to replace a diseased heart with an animal heart or mechanical heart. The families of these individuals have reportedly been satisfied and happy with the attempts to prolong the life of their loved ones. The same article <sup>38</sup> on medicine reveals some vital statistics

<sup>38</sup>American Council on Transplantation. "Medicine: One Miracle, Many Doubts" Time, 124:24 (December 10, 1984) 70.

which show the high demand for transplantations among individuals.

<u>Parts</u>	<u>Transplants Performed in U.S. 1983</u>	<u>Average Cost</u>	<u>one year success rate</u>	<u>People waiting for transplants</u>
Heart	172	\$100,000	80%	40*
Kidney	6,116	30,000	60-85%	7,000
Liver	163	135,000	65%	175
Pancreas	218	35,000	35-40%	30*

\*50,000 could benefit from Heart transplants

\*5,000 could benefit from pancreas transplants

It is not cheap to undergo this type of operation. The legality, cost and moral question are still issues which surround this form of medical care. The constant question is, when is this type of operation necessary? That question can only be answered by aware and acknowledgeable family members of the potential recipient and medical professors and professionals who are honest in their evaluation and technique.

For every advancement, there seemingly is a cost. Sometimes the cost is more than money. The computerized age has made a tremendous impact on the economy in terms of productivity and automation, but the human factor is equally affected. No longer are certain skills and semi skilled jobs needed in certain industries and corporations because of the computer and robot phenomenon. Many individuals have become obsolete and not valuable. If they are not re-trained or re-tooled into the new advanced systems of operation, they faced the harsh reality of unemployment and

and underemployment. There are just so many "high tech" jobs and computer jobs opened in the job market.

The human cost of the computer revolution is staggering. Brad, whose book on Technostress, is a sound and sober treatment of the mental health problems which are related to technology. Persons do abuse persons; needless to say, persons under the influence of machines can do similar psychological damage to themselves and fellow creatures. Throughout his book, he cites specific detrimental effects upon individuals, such as "eye strain and headaches from working too many hours in front of a VDT terminal; fear and frustration when familiar office routines are made instantly obsolete in the high tech work place; video game addiction; and the durability to cope with the intricacies and subtleties of human relationships and family life."<sup>39</sup>

These types of physical and psychological problems made an indelible impression on the human family at large. Now, we move to the final part, the Human Mind and media Programming which compliments what has been said and offers additional insights into the structuring of human behavior, especially black people.

## 2. The Human Mind and Media Programming

The first section shows that we have a hate and love

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<sup>39</sup>Brad, Books Jacket, general profile statment of the book.

relationship with the "tech phenomenon." The improvements of our society do reflect the presence of technology. Progress is not bad. The problem occurs when one's worth and dignity are measured by his or her ability to master complex and sometimes difficult knowledge and skills which pertained to a machine or computer. We are constantly informed of up-to-date technology by media programming. The main avenues of media exposure are television, radio, newspapers, magazines, journals, books and other literary forms of communication.

In a matter of seconds we can learn of events in any location of the globe by switching on the television or radio. No place in the world is so remote and hidden that a television camera can not beam its reality to us in split second adequacy on our television screens.

The television is recognized as the greatest form of communication in the history of humankind. No other instrument has as much power as the television on a daily basis. Some will say that the motion picture industry has immense power. This industry can produce such films as E.T., Superman, Terms of Endearment, Gandhi, Star Wars I, II, & III, Places in the Heart and Soldier's story and grossed millions of dollars. The success is obvious. But if it were not for the advertisement and promotional schemes which are aired on television, these films or any other films would make nearly the profits. The power of television

stands alone.

Our minds are vulnerable to the external forces of media programming. The human mind is a reception of impulses and stimuli-from things in the world. Therefore, we are constantly receiving information even when we are sleeping. The research of psychologists and scientific behaviorists have discovered that the human mind has an unconscious or subliminal level that picks up and stored information even when the person is not consciously aware of the process going on.

The writer came across Tony Schwartz's book Media The Second God which is an excellent study on how the media have shaped our world. Early in his book, he established the tone with these words:

The media are all-knowing. They supply a community of knowledge and feelings and a common morality. Many people in the United States, literate and illiterate alike, simply do not read. They receive information from the television whether or not they seek that information. It often comes to them in the form of entertainment...Media are both a door to the mind and a window on the world. 40

He finally believed that people are heavily controlled by what they see and hear on the television and on the radio, as well as in the newspapers. This is strikingly brought out by his additional comments:

The media profoundly affect community attitudes, political structure, and the psychological state of

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<sup>40</sup> Tony Schwartz. The Second God, (New York: Random House, 1981), p. 4.

entire countries. Godlike, the media can change the course of a war, bring down a president (former President Richard Nixon's Watergate incident-mine emphasis) or a king, elevate the lowly and humiliate the proud, by directing the attention of millions on the same event and in the same manner. 41

Schwartz's words are disturbing by yet true; any of us would only need to watch television a few hours of a day and we soon realize how enormous and consuming that "tube" is in our lives. Some people are so consumed by television that a medical diagnosis of "visual addiction" would not be far fetched. Black people are especially affected by television.

In recent years, black scholars and leaders have been seriously examining the influence of television and other media instruments on the black community. People like Drs. Nathan Hare, Alvin Poussaint, and Frances Cress Welsing have done studies on the psychological and psychiatric implications of television on the black psyche. In The Black Scholar, mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana, wrote an arresting article on "Mass Media and the Black Community" which gave some valuable insights into the influences of the media on black folks. Black people have used the media to enhance their appeal for social equality and justice in this country. (The Civil Rights Movements 1956-1968 was a prime example). They have also vehemently protested media stereotyping and distorting imagery through the years.<sup>42</sup> They have experienced

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>42</sup>Richard Hatcher, "Mass Media and The Black Community" Black Scholar 5:1 September 1973) p. 6-9.

the bittersweet relation with the media.

Also, appearing in the same Black Scholar was an article by Pamela Douglas entitled, "Black Television: Avenues of Power." She persuasively argued that black people can ill afford to let the white power structure have complete control of the television. Black people, in her estimation, must become station owners and required skills to master the commercial and cable forms of television.<sup>43</sup> There is no substitute for freeing black minds from the continuing exposure to media symbols and images which consciously and subliminally portrayed black life in negative and destructive ways.

A further mental health interpretation was presented in a study entitled, "Television, Self-Esteem and The Afro American Child: Some Implications for Mental Health Professionals" by Gordon L. Berry. He referred to researchers to show the immense attraction of television on American people. The following statement bear this out:

Hiebert, Ungurciet and Bohn, commenting on the scope of television in this country, observed that over 66 million homes (95 per cent of all U.S. households) are equipped with television sets. More than 60 per cent of the people own two sets, and Hiebert and his colleagues reported that the A. C. Nielson Company data show that the average T. V. household uses it sets more than 44.5 hours per week. 44

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 26-30.

<sup>44</sup> Gordon L. Berry, "Television, Self-Esteem and The Afro American child: Some Implications for Mental Health Professionals," in Barbara A. Bass and Gloria A. Powell The Afro American Family (New York: Greene and Stratton, 1982), p. 318.

Some experts have also said that "the average American child watching approximately 6 hours per day of television."

Concurrently, Gordon Berry shared information which shows that "a child borne in the 1980s by the age of 18, have spent more time watching television than in any other single activity, with the exception of sleep."<sup>45</sup>

Religious leaders, psychologists, psychiatrists and attorneys on a number of occasions have expressed the correlation between television violence and drug and alcohol uses with the increasing negative behavioral patterns of young and old. Time, had a disturbing article on "Private Violence" which focused on the alarming problems of child abuse, wife beating and rape in our society.<sup>46</sup> In the black community, these conditions are also prevalent. The article brought out that television does air programs which revealed domestic conflict and violence and this has a powerful influence on human beings whose minds are attracted to the "shadow" side of interpersonal relationships.

The black community in America is not as safe and secure as it once was. Robbery, theft, homicide, suicide, rape, burglary, drug addiction, prostitution, and family and marriage abuses are ever increasing problems for its people. The ability of them to master the television system and

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 318.

<sup>46</sup>"Private Violence" Time 122:10 (September 5, 1983) 18-26.



affect a better visual portrayal of black life in the urban setting can greatly assist in minimizing the destructive life styles of some blacks.

This chapter has revealed some significant themes, under the title, The Contemporary Profile of Black Life in the Urban Context. We looked at urban life from a Promised Land and Plantation perspective, the harsh realities of social discrimination and disenfranchisement, and the social conflicts between the Haves and Haves Nots. From that point, a brief examination on Rev. Jesse Jackson's Presidential Candidacy offered hope and pride to black people and concurrently, his campaign emphasized some aspects of Community Mental Health. We have just concluded with the final section on the 1980s "Tech" phenomenon: An inseparable reality. This has brought us to the point of discussing the next chapter on the Black Church's Role in Pastoral Care and then the final Chapter 4, which will examine "the urban Black Church's Educational/Training Model for Community Mental Health Care."

## CHAPTER 3

## THE BLACK CHURCH'S ROLE IN PASTORAL CARE

God does not die on the day when we cease to believe in a personal deity, but we die on the day when our lives cease to be illumined by the steady radiance, renewed daily, of a wonder, the source of which is beyond all reason.

Dag Hammarskjod <sup>1</sup>

This chapter offers the opportunity to examine the vital ways in which the church has sustained, guided, and healed black folks since the horrendous days of chattel slavery to the present where computers, shuttle space vehicles, video games and transplantation of human organism are regular occurrences in American life. This chapter will be divided in the following manner: 1) the functions of the black ministry in the area of Pastoral Care; 2) the traditional church activities of the Preacher/Pastor are examined in relation to Pastoral Care; and 3) the demands and responsibilities of the black minister are seen in light of personal mental health care.

The area of Pastoral Care is noted for voluminous materials which reflect a rich and varied treatment of themes, issues and subjects in the human situation and the church. Equally impressive are the outstanding scholars in the field such as Wayne Oates, Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., E. Brooks Holifield, Edgar N. Jackson, Robert Leslie, David Switzer,

<sup>1</sup>Dean Walley, All Men Seek God (St. Louis, Missouri, Hallmark Cards, p. 7.

Edward P. Wimberly, Carroll M. Felton and Archie Smith, who have contributed invaluable books on the subject. For an overview of Pastoral care, Holifield's, A History of Pasoral Care in America and Clinebell's Basic types of Pastoral Care and Counseling (rev.) are informative and insightful in their presentations.

There are two basic questions which must be answered from the beginning, first, What is pastoral care? Secondly, What is Black Pastoral Care? Although these are broad and encompassing questions, a general answer will establish the tone of this third chapter. The answers on both questions are stated by Clinebell and Edward Wimberly. Clinebell defines Pastoral care in this manner, "it is a response to the need that everyone has for warmth, nurture, support and caring. The need is heightened during times of personal stress and social chaos."<sup>2</sup> Usually, when a person reads this quotation, he/she thinks in an "outreach" or "outer" perspective as it relates to the surrounding neighborhoods or community at large. This is not the complete view. Thanks to Clinebell, we are exposed to an holistic understanding of Pastoral care which includes the congregation and the community. Borrowing from research data, he uses two functional realities known as "in-reaching" and "out-

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<sup>2</sup>Howard J. Clinebell, Jr. Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984) p. 46.

reaching."<sup>3</sup> Outreaching is an emphasis on non churchgoers who live in the community. "In-reaching," which is paramount to church nurturing and development, is an emphasis on individuals who are members of the congregation. The people who are hurt, frustrated, angry, confused and lost in the membership. The congregation rallies behind them in the spirit of care, love and counseling.<sup>4</sup>

The second question, What is Black Pastoral Care? Some people could find the term, "Black Pastoral Care," to be unnecessary and offensive. They do not see the relevance of attaching a color distinction to a religious function. Their reason is understandable. However, black people in the church context have unique forms of Pastoral care, which prior to the works of Carroll Felton, Edward Wimberly, David Hurst, and Archie Smith, were not mentioned of any depth by white traditional scholarship.

Black people have been able to translate, adapt and apply white church's view of Pastoral care ministry to fit their circumstances in America. Edward Wimberly, states that "Pastoral care is communal concept. It exists whenever persons minister to one another in the name of God."<sup>5</sup> As a way of depicting the black church's role in this context, he expresses this follow up statement:

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Edward Wimberly, Pastoral Care in the Black Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), p. 17.

Pastoral care exists when the hungry are fed, when the naked are clothed, when the sick are healed, when the prisoners are visited. Therefore, it can be concluded that pastoral care has always existed in the black church because of the needs of persons as ministered by others all the time. <sup>6</sup>

There are other forms of Pastoral care in which black churches do practice but this above statement presents an illustration of the reality of Black Pastoral Care. Therefore, the two basic questions, What is Pastoral care? And What is Black Pastoral Care? have been generally treated.

The remaining of this chapter will apply to the reality of Pastoral care within the three mentioned divisions. Although the black perspective is a point of departure in the forthcoming pages, other persons of different cultural persuasions will receive insights which do speak to their existential reality. The last section on the clergy's personal mental health care is a subject of utmost importance for most ministers including black ministers. For instance, certain topics such as burnout, stress, and mid-life career change have direct bearing on clergypersons in the Christian ministry. The clergy are not impeccable or infallible persons, even though they dress in black and white robes on Sunday morning and proclaimed the Gospel of Peace, Salvation and Liberation to countless numbers of people. The heart warming and sensitive books of Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, When Bad Things Happen to Good People, Lucille

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

Lavenders, They Cry Too! and David and Vera Mace, What's Happening to Clergy Marriages? are a testimony to the need of ministers to seriously grapple and resolve personal mental health problems and issues. More will be said in the latter pages of the chapter.

#### A. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BLACK MINISTRY IN THE AREA OF PASTORAL CARE

The functions of the black ministry is expressed in many ways in the lives of black people whose journey in American has not always been a tranquil condition. History is a shattering remainder of what black people have actually gone through in an oppressive circumstance. This is not to ignore that some black people have escaped the direct experience of social prejudice and discrimination, but they undeniably know that the issue of skin pigmentation is deeply rooted in the country's psyche. Generally speaking, most black people realize that the issue of "being first of your race" is a clear and concise message that the labels of disadvantage, underdog and exception are attached to their being. For instance, Jackie Robinson who became the first black professional baseball player in 1947; Lt. Colonel Guion S. Bluford who became the first black American in space in 1983.

The over-arching task of ministry is to free black people from those mental, social, emotional and spiritual

impediments that prevent them from performing as whole and healthy individuals. Concurrently, they must be free of the intrapsychic chains (low self-esteem, the feeling of inferiority and the feeling of powerlessness) that find strength and sanction from the societal social structures.

Since the inception of the invisible institution during chattel slavery, black people have gathered together in a specific locations for the expressed purpose of experiencing corporate power and courage to combat the trials and tribulations of life. Some scholars have gone as far as to state that the gathering of the black people did symbolize a re-creation of the kinship-model which functioned in Africa. To power of familyhood and peoplehood was a reality that gave hope, companionship, and the will-to-live to countless numbers of black people who endured the many midnights of physical and mental abuses. We will briefly look at two parts in this section, a) The Past: There is a balm in Gilead and b) The Present: Troubles don't last always. These two popular church songs depict the black ministry's functional value to its people.

#### 1. The Past: There is a balm in Gilead

Although the selection, "there is a balm in Gilead" is used in the past, this does not discount its current relevance and power for black church people. The beauty of the lyrics is seen thusly, "there is a balm in Gilead to

heal the sin sick soul, there is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole." Any denomination, race or groups of people could find hope and meaning in the above words. The song was not popular during the periods where legalized slavery was the norm of American society. But, the needs of an oppressed people to feel and experience healing, comfort and resolution of problems were paramounted in scope.

The historical accounts of slave narratives, slave diaries and eye witness reports substantiated the fact that the Christian ministry was significant and real when it spoke to black folks' daily reality. John Blassingame, Eugene Genovese, Henry Mitchell, Albert Raboteau and Edward Wimberly have verified the above statement which insightful documentations from those whose lives were changed and made better through their involvement with a relevant ministry.

During the early years of slavery, black people did the best they could in relating to each other since tribal solidarity was brokened. A fragmented form of African religion and oral interpreters functioned to keep group identity viable in the slave community.

Edward Wimberly skillfully employed the four functional models of William Clebsch, Charles R. Jaekle and Seward Hiltner to the black experience from a pastoral care perspective. Clebsch and Jaekle are credited with developing the functions, healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling to the Christian ministry. These functions were not



foreign or new in the traditional African religions context, because of the religious specialist (Medicine man, conjurer, medium and priest) who performed in varied ways all four functions in relation to their people.

The Great Awakening in the eighteenth century was a major revival movement which focused on individual salvation and the ministering power of God's spirit in the country. The black slaves were attracted to this general outflowing of religious fervor among white people and soon adopted various aspects of it into their experience. The spirit of God or "the High God" <sup>7</sup> in many African religions was the primary source who gave impetus and substance to the four functions: healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling. These functions would not have been possible without the presence of God. When the church was known as the invisible institution in the slave community, its leadership was involved with such problems as family hostility, drunkenness, stealing and physical and mental abuses among the slaves.<sup>8</sup>

For the writer to elaborate in great detail concerning the four functions would be a form of redundancy, because Wimberly has done a superior job in this area. Wimberly basically focused on healing, sustaining and guiding in his study. What would be insightful at this

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<sup>7</sup>Henry H. Mitchell Black Belief (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1975) p. 68-74.

<sup>8</sup>John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) Ch. 7.

venture is to offer an understanding of reconciliation as an equally significant function among the other functions in the past. Generally speaking, Wimberly states the four functions in the following manner:

- 1) Healing consists of binding up the wounds; repairing damage that has been done as the result of disease.
- 2) Sustaining refers to helping persons courageously and creatively endure and transcend difficult situations while preventing or lessening the impact of the situation.
- 3) Guiding seeks to help persons in trouble make confident choices between alternative courses of action that will help them solve the problems they are facing.
- 4) Reconciliation seeks to re-establish broken relationships between a person and God on the one hand, and between a person and other person on the other. <sup>9</sup>

In the first chapter, we discovered that some black people while in slavery did afflict pain and injury on each other. Subsequently, they had to deal with stealing, stabbing, drunkenness, fights, family disputes and sometimes homicides among themselves. Those black folks, who were directly victims of these unpleasant experiences, needed strength to overcome the initial shock and sadness and then support and power to eventually forgive and, if possible, reconcile with the person(s) who caused the incidents. In other words, as the song states, "there is a balm in Gilead

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<sup>9</sup>Wimberly, p. 18-19.

to heal the sin sick soul and make the wounded whole," the application of which applied to black crime and violence in the slave community, as well as Northern communities that represented black population.

The ministries of Richard Allen, Absalom Jones and Henry Highland Garnet were testimonies of problems and vices within the black urban community. These ministers and others specifically organized societies and groups which attempted to uplift and improve the moral standards of their people. In addition, the realities of drunkenness, stealing and family abuses were presented and the function of reconciliation had to be part of the other three functions for the ministry to have a holistic perspective. The value of reconciliation is to strengthen and build up the internal relationship of a community and the slaves and free negroes needed to experience how to relate and forgive each other of wrongs and hurts.

Ira Berlin has given an informative picture of key activities of the ministry through the church structure. Included in his following comments are the elements of dealing with adulterers and reuniting separated couples which can be incorporated in the function of reconciliation:

Black churches strengthened the black family by insisting that marriages be solemnized by religious services, punishing adulterers, and occasionally reuniting separated couples. The church was more than a source of discipline; it was a center for education, a provider of social insurances, and a place where blacks might relax and organize community entertainment. Black churches

supported schools and fraternal associations; church choirs gave concerts; church auxiliaries sponsored fairs, picnics, and banquets. The church expressed the community's social conscience by aiding the poor, supporting missionary activities, and helping other free negro communities establish like institutions. 10

Along with reconciliation, the quotation of Berlin also included the functions of sustaining and guiding in relation to black people who needed to experience self-esteem and community development through the vehicles of care, fellowship and shared resources. The past is the foundation for the present. A general view of the present is at hand.

## 2. The Present: Troubles Don't Last Always

The diverse functions of the ministry of black people have always reflected social, economic, political and spiritual approaches to Pastoral care. Living in a restricted and oppressed circumstances made black people seek out many positive experiences in the religious sector. The church, which is the base of ministry, has been expressed in more than one model of pastoral care. Joseph Washington has persuasively argued that pastoral care involved more than the mainline denominational churches of black people.<sup>11</sup> The presence of sects and cults have enabled some black people to deal with troubling situations with the assistance of charismatic leaders and close knit groups; all of which

<sup>10</sup> Ira Berlin. Slave Without Masters (New York: Vintage Press, 1974), p. 302

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Washington, Black Sects and Cults (New York: Doubleday, 1972), p. 12-17.

generated empowerment and strength. For instance, the value of the black cult-type is seen in these words:

At the heart of the black cult-type are the issues of death, illness, poverty and an improved social condition to overcome them. The cult is concerned not simply with the soul but with the whole life of the community and each individual. The spiritual realm is not set aside for the next world. Its reality is fully expected in here and now. <sup>12</sup>

Sometimes the cult-type ministry does not last long due to the basic characteristics which are small, local and built around a charismatic leader.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the current manifestation of cult-type gatherings are fulfilling certain pastoral care services of some black people who primarily lived in the urban and rural areas of America. The instant gratification and "living in the here and now" are attractive features for people who are searching for fulfillment and hope in this world.

Another religious expression is the sect-type in which people are drawn due to its appeal to the Gospel and to primitive Christianity.<sup>14</sup> Black people like other people who are part of this type of ministry, seem to possess some negative feelings concerning the mainline churches. They believe that the black denominational church is too much into the secular affairs and not focused enough on the teachings of the New Testament.<sup>15</sup> Some of the mainline churches are so

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 14

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 6

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 5

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

structured in the auxiliary orientation that some members are lost and the presence of individual attention is needed. This is substantiated in the words of J. Milton Yinger:

The sect-type is a movement in which the primary emphasis is the attempt to satisfy various basic individual needs by religious means. It is usually seen as a revolt against a religious system in which these needs have been inadequately dealt with. 16

An often ignored religious form of black Pastoral care in the inner city or urban context is the "storefront church." This particular gathering place is regularly seen in areas where there are heavy black population. We would find the storefront churches located in abandoned stores and houses and sometimes vacanted buildings or rented buildings.<sup>17</sup> Its religious names consist of the Temple of God in Christ, Freedom Hall of Spiritual Guidance and Holiness, the Holy of Holy Sanctuary of Jesus Christ, the Peace and Love House of God and numerous other religious references. The forms of pastoral care include high emotional spiritual services, internal group participation in such activities as benevolent programs, pastor aid, neighborhood fund raiser dinner projects, special healing sessions and revival worship services.

The general membership is small and close knit: the

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Church in America (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 1963), p. 60.

minister is male or female, and his or her formal education varies from a high school diploma to a college education. Some storefront ministers have another vocational position on the side in order to supplement their income. These ministers usually have minimal formal theological training; however, what they lacked in training, they make up with emotionalism and frequent scriptural utterances in sermons and teaching sessions.

The ministers and membership emphasized the importance of saintly living which includes no smoking, drinking, cursing, dancing, playing cards and adultery.<sup>18</sup> (Many mainline churches have the same types of restriction). These expressions are known as "carnal mindedness."<sup>19</sup> The goal of this life style is to lead the members into a holy and sanctify relationship with God. The type of religious view is positive for the membership since a majority of them is low income status and marginal education attainment; hence, they are able to experience a sense of acceptance, somebodyness and peoplehood in accordance with "living right" in the sight of God and humankind.

In conclusion, the four functions, sustaining, guiding, healing and reconciling are operative realities in the mainline church, cult type, sect-type and storefront church setting. Black people joined these religious structures for

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 61

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

various psychological, social and spiritual reasons. But the over-arching motivational factor in most cases is a desire to experience the Divine on a close basis. Their effort is by no means perfect, some of them are misled, misguided and misdirected by fellow worshipers and clergy-persons. (The most tragic example is Jonestown where approximately 925 individuals died, which included 600+ black people in November 1978, Guyana). Nevertheless black people continue to shape forms of pastoral care which speak to individual and collective needs. The freedoms of autonomy and scriptural interpretation are highly guarded by black people, who strive to feel adequate competent in the church setting.

At this point in our discussion on the church's role in Pastoral Care, an examination of some of the traditional activities of the Preacher/Pastor in the church/community settings will add a further understanding of religion in the Black experience. The Preacher/Pastor is a crucial personality in the life of Black America.

**B. SOME TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE PREACHER/PASTOR/IN THE CHURCH/COMMUNITY SETTINGS**

The writer will highlight some of the cardinal activities and events in which the Preacher/Pastor has directed involvement in "the care of souls" in the congregation. In the previous section on the functions of the



Black ministry in the area of Pastoral care, we observed some of the reasons for black people's participation in the religious institution. Most folks are drawn to a particular religious persuasion or structure because of the interaction with the leadership, members or the fulfillment of some personal needs. The Preacher/Pastor plays a significant role in the building, sustaining and growth of the community of faith.

The office of Preacher/Pastor on a general level is a challenging and demanding life call. We are fortunate to have numerous scholars and pastors who have expressed insightful knowledge into the searching ramifications of the ministerial call. For instance, how a Preacher or minister received authority is clearly noted by H. Richard Niebuhr, "Ministers have derived their immediate authority to preach and teach, lead worship, care of souls and perform their other offices from the church and from scripture. When they have been asked about their authority they have pointed to these two 'powers' as the ones they represented."<sup>20</sup> From the minister's varied functions and duties, the "care of souls" is viewed as being essential in the life of the community of faith. The minister is recognized as having a special relationship with God; he or she is the representative of

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<sup>20</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), p. 69.

God. Daniel Day Williams shared "an important concept known as 'the Principle of Linkage' which focuses on the minister being a link between a fragmented soul and God."<sup>21</sup> He also offered keen perception into the fragmentary reality being lodged within the minister and thus he or she has to experience a relationship with a friend for the purpose of achieving healing and comfort. (More will be stated on this subject in the final section of this chapter).

The writer has been extremely blessed by the writings of Henri Nouwen whose thought and concepts concerning the Christian ministry have been a great source of strength. Nouwen's two books, The Wounded Healer and The Living Reminder are stirring testimonies which dramatize the "serving power" of the ministry in relation to human life. He views the minister's vocation as making a continual connection between the human story with the Divine story.<sup>22</sup> He explains that the "story character" does not focus on fantasy, illusion, or isolation from the realities of life, but rather the engagement of life is paramount. He describes this fact thusly:

The challenge of ministry is to help people in very concrete situations-people with illnesses, or in grief, people with physical or mental handicaps, people

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<sup>21</sup>Daniel D. Williams, The Ministry and The Care of Souls (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 26-27.

<sup>22</sup>Henri Nouwen, The Living Reminder (New York: Seabury Press, 1981, p. 24.

suffering from poverty and oppression, people caught in the complex networks of secular or religious institutions. To see and experience their story as part of God's ongoing redemptive work in the world. 23

Nouwen's words speak to the immense responsibility of the minister in the area of pastoral care. His insightful statement focuses on all clergy persons who have taken up the mantle of modern day service in the church/community context.

The Black Preacher/Pastor is a member of the Christian ministry that Niebuhr, Williams and Nouwen spoke about in their remarks. An illumination of this belief is seen in some traditional models of care in the black experience.

# 1. The Traditional Models of Care

a. The Spiritual Leader. When a person acknowledges a call to the ministry, he or she has taken on the symbolic role of God's servant to the hearers. Thus the person is thrust into a network of social expectations and desires which are noted in Afro American History, scripture and the specific church affiliation. The model of spiritual leader becomes apparent when he or she is in charge of a congregation or a group of people. Being a spiritual leader is not an easy task for the black clergyperson. He or she has the

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

responsibility of leading, protecting, correcting and supporting the congregation or flock.<sup>24</sup> The people are prone to pay high respect to the Pastor. It is not surprising for older adults (40 to 60) and elderly adults (65 to 90+) affectionately and lovingly referred to the spiritual leader or Pastor, disregarding the age factor, as "you are the Father of us all."<sup>25</sup>

The people expect the leader to be all things for them. Sometimes they are guilty of putting divine attributes on this model of care. As Wimberly notes, "because of this assignment, many laity have expected the minister to be omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent and to provide solutions to many earthly problems as well as to be a custodian of the values connecting them to God."<sup>26</sup> Having to meet these lofty expectations can be burdensome and extremely taxing for the clergypersons. Nevertheless, some black people need to have an image to look up to and a person who exhibited parental kindness, discipline, concern and love. When they are in relationship with such a person, they feel secure, positive and better able to cope with the problems and pressures of life.

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<sup>24</sup>Floyd Massey, Jr., and Samuel B. McKinney, Church Administration in the Black Perspective (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1976), p. 34.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Wimberly, p. 36.

b. The Doctor of the Souls. The Preacher/Pastor has traditionally been the community therapist.<sup>27</sup> Generally, black people have gone to their pastor or minister first to solve the emotional/physical problems and upon his/her recommendation sought other professionals in the community. The writer can recall as early as childhood church folks referring to their pastor as doctor. Doc or Bishop and sometimes the minister did not have an earned doctorate from an accredited academic institution.

This was not stupidity or naviete on the part of Black Christians, but rather they were expressing respect and admiration for the pastor's ability to solve their problems through the laying on hands, preaching the word, articulating a fervent prayer or "talk with" or counseling them effectively. Archie Smith gives us a glimpse of how effective the model is:

The Preacher/Pastor continues to be a bringer of glad tidings, a spiritual and psychological healer, the interpreter of the unknown, the comforter in times of sorrow, the one who gives voice and picturesquely expresses the longings, disappointments and resentments of a stolen and oppressed. 28

c. The Indigenous Counselor. The Preacher/Pastor is

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<sup>27</sup> Archie Smith, The Relational Self, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), p. 76.

<sup>28</sup>  
Ibid.

seen as indigenous counselor because of his/her often times accessibility and availability in the church/community contexts. It should be noted that some black Pastors do not like to counsel so they usually refer members to other clergypersons or professionals in the church or community; or, they do not have special office hours for counseling. However, being a pastor is a twenty-four hour vocation and some form of counseling is inescapable. David Hurst in his doctoral dissertation "The Shepherding of Black Christians" included counseling as one of the principle models of the clergy. The other two are teaching and preaching. These three modes of care are the backbone of the black church.

Most black church people refer to a counseling session as talking with the pastor or a ministerial staff person in a church or home setting. Certain statements as your sermon spoke to a burning issue or problem in my life; pastor, I'm hurting, or "Rev. can you drop by my home as soon as possible" or "may I see you in the study," are viewed as a counseling opportunities for this clergyperson.

Some statements can be crisis situations, hence the pastor will have to immediately respond to the person in need. He or she has to use prayerful insight, quick and sound crisis intervention techniques and common sense to effectively guide, sustain and direct the person(s) in the crisis setting.<sup>29</sup> One of the great advantages of a pastor is the

<sup>29</sup>David K. Switzer, The Minister as Crisis Counselor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), p. 20-28.

congregational resource; David Switzer shares this same opinion with these words, "the community of faith is an available source of support, back up and professional referral system for the pastor who has a counseling ministry."<sup>30</sup>

There are other models of care which can be stated, but these three are representative of the prominent ones operating in many black churches today. Concurrently, the Preacher/Pastor is involved in "the vehicles of care" which assist in ministering to persons in need.

## 2. The Vehicles of Care

This part is divided into two subdivisions, The Worship hour and the Symbols of Somebodyness. The Preacher/Pastor plays a vital part in the implementation of both areas in the church. We will briefly review the main characteristics which make up the vehicles of care.

a. The Worship Hour. This is a special time for Christians, especially black Christians. This form of human expression has enabled church folks to experience comfort, guidance and strength for the coming week. W. B. DuBois, Archie Smith, Edward Wimberly, Henry H. Mitchell and many others are consistent in describing the pastoral care and mental health value of the worship hour.

For example, Archie Smith states that "worship and

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

revival in the black church tradition was the most characteristic expression of African character linking therapeutic expressions with the moral life."<sup>31</sup> The preached word, praying and the songs of Zion have enabled black people to express their pent up emotions and feelings in a safe and nourishing environment.

The writer had an opportunity to read a penetrating article by William B. McClain which delved into the historical/sociocultural/psychological characteristics of black folks' experience with God. A sample of his thought as follows:

Worship in the Black Tradition is celebration of the power to survive and to affirm life, with all of its complex and contradictory realities. The sacred and secular and Saturday night and Sunday morning come together to affirm God's wholeness, the unity of life and His Lordship over all of life. 32

He went on to discuss the value of rituals, music, and black preaching in relation to strengthening and enouraging the congregation during the worship experience.

The power of community is extremely important for the care of souls. The writer has been in numerous worship services where the Spirit (as black folks say) took charge of the people who got "happy" in the experience. I am sure that on some occasions, some people, who joyfully responded, were

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<sup>31</sup>Smith, p. 76.

<sup>32</sup>William B. McClain "The Soul of Black Worship" A.M.E. Zion Quartly Review 93:3 (October 1981), 13.



not living smooth and tranquil circumstances. But that was not important. What was, came out in the worship service where the Divine moved in a mighty and powerful way in their midst. When that happened, the brokenhearted are healed; the captives are liberated; the bowed heads are uplifted and the tears of sadness are transformed to tears of joy.

b. The symbols of somebodyness. These are seen in what the church has to offer the members. In many churches, the members are officers and active participants on boards, auxiliaries, groups and clubs. Being a deacon, a trustee, an usher, a deaconesse, a choir member, or a Sunday school teacher is a worthwhile and rewarding to experience; this is surely the case, when the pastor is involved in empowering them to achieve maximal creativity and organizational innovation and growth. On the other hand, a lazy pastor usually promotes deadness, malady, and do-nothingness among church boards and auxiliaries.

The writer had an interesting experience in the early part of 1984, at Trinity Baptist Church in Los Angeles, where Elliot J. Mason is the pastor of this church of 5,000 members. The occasion was a Friday night evening program in which Mrs. Vashti Hodges, a member, was honored for her many years of service as Director of Youth work. She has been loved and respected by young and old at the church. Many young adults,

who were under her leadership, gave mini-testimonies regarding her integrity, care, guidance and motherly manner. She is affectionately known as a "second mother" to many young people of the church. This is a prime illustration of the caring spirit that has characterized church life in the community. Countless numbers of people are helped, encouraged, and comforted through the association of boards, auxiliary system and groups in the church context.

More could be said in this section on The Traditional activities of the Preacher/Pastor in the church and community but enough has been shared to reveal the multifaceted character of church life among black people. An issue of the strains and pressures of the clergy vocation has been publicized and recent data on Burnout has included the minister as a victim. The last few pages have shown that the Preacher/Pastor has various functions to perform, and sometimes unrealistic demands are placed upon him/her by the people. A general look at the subject, The Minister is human too will be of value for those who are called to serve this present age.

#### C. THE MINISTER IS HUMAN TOO

The major portion of this chapter has focused on Pastoral care as it relates to laypersons and community residents. The care of individuals in a religious structure is vital for the health and welfare of the community. This

form of Pastoral care has an external application to it. The emphasis is directed toward the recipients of caring services. In other words, the provider or catalyst is usually the minister, who directs, administers and coordinates the various functions of the church. In this situation the minister is exposed to the adulations and ridicules of the people who evaluate the significance and worth of the church experience. He (in the generic sense) is continually under pressure to perform "miracles" and "cures" as members and outsiders come to him for services. Living this kind of environment can be stress producing and anxiety centered for the minister. The purpose of this section is to generally discuss and "internal application" of Pastoral care which takes into account what the minister is facing in the service context.

The ministry is a very prestigious and influential profession for individuals to enter. (This is especially true for black persons). The glamor and glitter of being called "Rev.," "Rev. Dr.," or "Pastor" and speaking and serving the masses are appealing realities. Needless to say, a coin has two sides, so does the ministry. The writer is aware of "the coin factor" in the ministry, in that I am an ordained clergyman who has experienced the highs and lows of church life. Sometimes, I have been to the mountaintop during a sermon experience and then found myself soon afterwards slowly walking through the valley of disappointments

and failures. It is not easy living up to one's own expectations as well as congregational expectations. I have discovered that human imperfections are presented in myself and others.

The theme of this section is divided into two parts: a) The demands and responsibilities of the ministry and b) Burnout: Bad news for God's servant. These two parts will further illustrate the church's role in Pastoral care.

1. The demands and responsibilities of the ministry.

First, the demands of the ministry can be an all consuming reality for the minister. The person who wears the ministerial garb is on call for twenty-four hours a day. He has to successfully relate to individuals who come to him for various reasons. There are many forms of ministeries today which involve the clergypersons in a host of professional and service opportunities; however, the over-arching character in these situations is coping with the "People Servant Image." He is called upon to help the rich and poor. She is called upon to find jobs for the unemployed; he is called upon to heal wounded spirits and restore brokened relationships. The minister has to preach, counsel, direct, administer and supervise people ranging in numbers of a few to thousands.

The challenges of the minister in the 1980s are not easy or superfical. This is especially true of the black

clergy. As it has been previously stated, the black minister has to be a parental image, counselor, administrator and public relation director in the local church and other service situations. The "High Tech" era does not reduce the demands of ministerial service. Many black people are still under the harsh reality of "the last hire and first fire" in the job marketplace, most labor statistics of the 1980s put black unemployment in the twenty percent range, and, in the case of youth between 16 to 30 years of age, the range reflects 30 to 40 per cents in terms of joblessness in urban America.

Black writers such as Lerone Bennett, Nathan and Julia Hare, Robert Staples and Douglas G. Glasgow have eloquently discussed the socioeconomic crises of the black youth who are in the wasteland of shattered dreams and hopes in accordance with the "High Tech" society. The searching question remains, How can a local pastor effectively deal with the youth problem as well as other social problems such as drug abuse, family violence, marital disharmony, teenage pregnancy and the mid-life crises dilemma? Even for a highly successful pastor who leads five hundred to ten thousand people the problems and demands are enormous in scope.

Secondly, the responsibilities are akin to the demands. Some ministers have the Messiah Complex, the Boss Mentality, and the Do-Gooder symbol to live up to in

relational settings. The Black minister or pastor who plays the role of Messiah must maintain an all knowing and all wise posture in front of his people. This can be taxing to the clergyperson. Some church members do require that the pastor exhibits superhuman knowledge and skills in relation to Life's problems. If they see that he is not that way, sometimes, they may talk negatively about him; or resort to non-cooperative techniques such as reducing financial support, not functioning on committees, boards or auxiliaries. Although those are drastic responses by church folks, they do occur in some situations.

Another entrapped label of responsibility is "The Boss Mentality." This type focuses on the statement, "nothing is done in this church without my ok!" This kind of cautiousness and insecurity on the part of the black pastor allows for resentment and hostility to surface periodically in the congregational situation. Traditionally the black pastor has been characterized as being strong and in charge of the affairs of the church. But, in our present age of highly trained and educated people, those ministers who prescribed to the "Boss Mentality" are unduly burdening themselves and discounting the abilities and skills of laity. These churches come to be pastor or preacher centered at the price of keeping the people in a subordinate and child-like state. In other words, the people do not develop confident in themselves in the area of church life.

Consequently, they hold hidden and negative feelings toward the object of oppression, which is the black pastor of this type.

Even when the black pastor is a paternal boss, some members will still be intimidated and frustrated. He can be kind, considerate and loving in his godlike and dictatorial ways and the people will remain in a deprived and nongrowth relationship with him. He might urge them to do more in the church, but little or marginal response by the people will take place. For an insightful understanding to this relational dilemma. Paul Tournier brings this to light:

No one can develop his own personality except at the expense of other people. Even the most saintly and humble man-the revered and much loved leader of a devoted congregation, for example-inevitably makes his followers dependent upon him, like little children. It is not his faults, but his virtues, his fame and his richness of spirit, which hold them back and prevent them from growing up themselves. He will plead in vain for them to show more initiative. They will only do so when he has gone. Little trees do not thrive when they are too close to a big one. 33

Some ministers and pastors would deny or even become angry with Paul Tournier's above quotation, to the extent of discounting the importance of his statement. While other clergypersons would soberly and seriously reflect upon his

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<sup>33</sup>Paul Tournier, "The Violence Within" (San Francisco: Harper & Row 1978), p. 38-39.

insight and then search within themselves for the causes and eventual remedy of the Boss Mentality. The shepherd leads the flock to the green pasture of development and growth. When the pastor fails to change or grow, then he/she is stuck in the quicksand of self-pity, self-aggrandisement and self-adulation. And, thus, the minister and the congregation are joint victims.

The final label is the Do-Gooder Symbol. The ministers who fall into this category are psychologically and spiritually haunted by certain statements as "I must save the world for Christ!" "I can not rest or relax until the church is actually saving the community from the wiles of Satan!" "My family must take a back seat to the church family," and "I should be on every 'good cause' committee, program and organization which serve the community." These are high lofty aspirations and desires by the pastor. But, for a normal person, such goals can be extremely hard and difficult to achieve. A person can do just so much in the course of his/her life. Being a minister does not immune him for experiencing setbacks, roadblocks and frustrations in accordance with "doing good in the world." The congregation must be watchful and sensitive so that the pastor of this label does not become pessimistic and dishearted with the effort to serve humanity. The level of personal stress is high for this category, and the church members have to



slow down their pastor in a firm but yet loving way. They will have to take on church responsibilities and duties so that the pastor can be relieved of some pressures and hopefully establish realistic goals over the short and long ranges. Concurrently, the Pastor will have to recognize his/her limitations and imperfections in terms of being "a person of all seasons."

This is a general observation analysis of some of the demands and responsibilities of the ministry. The "internal application" of Pastoral care focuses on the minister being attuned to his strengths and weaknesses and thus he is open to the "ministering spirit" of others. This is not always easy to achieve. The ministry automatically requires a constant exposure to human needs and sometimes the struggles are such that the minister searches for or cries out for assistance. This leads us to the final part, Burnout: Bad News for God's Servant.

## 2. Burnout: Bad News for God's Servant

The Los Angeles Times printed two articles which illuminate a common personality: the minister is not seen as an infallible or impeccable individual but rather he/she is a member of the human family, who can experience hurt, pain, illness and frustration.

The first article reveals that the clergypersons and their families sometimes need to get away from the fishbowl

life of the local church and with the assistance of a Christian psychiatrist began to peel away the "Persona" or "social mask" and feel the pains and dissappointments involved in the personal and ministerial contexts. Russel Chandler, the Times Religion writer and author of the article, ventured beyond the ministerial glamour and glitter to uncover hidden problems faced by the minister.

He states:

Ministers and other religious professionals have personal, emotional and family problems, but most of them do not like to admit it. Ministers are suppose to have all the answers. Many feel, and it shows a lack of faith if they cannot just lay their problems before the Lord and let him solve them. Yet, without psychiatric help their effectiveness may be hendered or destroyed. 34

The psychiatrist in the article was Dr. Louis McBurney, a Southern Baptist churchman, whose Chrisitian commitment led him to develop a modern retreat center high in a rugged and remote resort area of the Rocky Mountains 60 miles from Aspen, Colorado.<sup>35</sup> He was moved to assist ministers who needed professional guidance in order to effectively cope with the pressures, anxieties and frustrations of the profession.

The date of 1977 in which this article was published does not minimize the issues which are current today among

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<sup>34</sup>Russel Chandler, "Psychiatrist Ministers to Ministers", Los Angeles Times (September 4, 1977), p. 3.

<sup>35</sup>  
Ibid.

the clergy. The article showed that certain problems as, the feeling of inadequacy or failure, parishioners fostering high expectations, loneliness and isolation, lack of personal and family privacy, lack of sufficient funds to live, retirement and the middle age crises <sup>36</sup> were motivational factors which brought some ministers and their families to spend two weeks at McBurney's retreat in Colorado. Very few pastors and ministers would disagree with the relevance of the above issues. The value of such a program was attested by one of the pastors who stated, "pastors sometimes can go to other pastors with problems, but sometimes they need to go to someone who can help them see their problems in a different way." <sup>37</sup>

The second article shows a recent social phenomenon which negatively effects individuals who are endeavoring to meet the high pressure demands of 1980s. Prior to this article, the writer did not know what Burnout stood for. Earlier in the study we look at the Tech phenomenon as it related to human life, productivity, automation and computers. At that time we discover certain unhealthy trends in the society which have produced low self-esteem, uselessness, frustration and meaninglessness among many individuals. What this article does is to examine how the shifting economy, high Tech competitiveness, automation and

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

technology are taken immense toll on individuals in the work place.<sup>38</sup>

The reality of Burnout in general is a loss of personal energy, strength and desire to accomplish objectives and goal. An individual has over-extended or over-stretched his/her personal resources. The person needs relief, alternatives and a change of pace. An outline of the symptoms of Burnout appeared thusly in the article:

Increase irritability. Shortness of temper. Disappointment in the world at large. Alienation from close friends and family. Fatigue, lethargy and a low-energy threshold. Forgetfulness: a memory crisis that exceeds absent mindedness as it blots out appointments, deadlines and the location of personal possessions. Crabbiness and a decided inability to take a joke. A feeling inner that comes out of nowhere; tears, sadness that strike at the strangest moments. More and more work; longer and longer hours; less and less to show for it. 39

This is Burnout; the social illness which plagued many white collar and blue collar job holders. From the presence of Burnout we have specific social problems such as alcoholism, depression, decline in productivity, professional sabotage and white collar crime-along with an ongoing feeling of victimization, "a chronic feeling among many individuals that the society has done something to them."<sup>40</sup>

The reality of Burnout is alive and well in the

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Elizabeth Mehren, "Societal Burnout Pandemic In The Era of Automation," Los Angeles Times (October 26, 1982), p. 5.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

clergy ranks. It is bad news for God's servant. Since 1982 the writer has read nine books on Burnout and four of which are directly related to the clergy: G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping with Clergy Burnout; Brooks R. Faulkner, Burnout in Ministry; Charles Perry, Jr., Why Christians Burnout; and John A. Sanford, Ministry Burnout. These authors have given a panoramic picture of the socioeconomic/psychological/spiritual dimensions of clergy burnout.

The Black pastor or minister is not especially treated in the above books, but he can learn invaluable knowledge of the phenomenon of Burnout by reading and translating what the authors have to say on the subject to his particular experience. There are examples of the Burnout reality among the black clergy. Previous materials in the study have shown that the black pastor is confronted with a host of demands and responsibilities and he can succumb to loss of energy, meaninglessness, and fatigue if he is not careful. The local congregation must respond on a positive level when the pastor utters low energy and tiredness.

In June of 1982, Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr., the pastor of Allen Temple Baptist Church in East Oakland, California, who is the writer's ministerial father, shared in the church bulletin, his personal struggle with burnout. Smith is presently the leader of a church membership of 3,300 and his testimony is of great value for black and white pastors in the country. He writes:

# FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

I am now 51 years old. I am not as strong physically as I was 12 years ago when I became your pastor. Yet my love for you is far greater than it has ever been. My spirit makes me try to counsel, marry, visit in the hospitals, prisons, jails, or courtrooms, or conduct burial rites and bless each and every baby, but my flesh only permits me to do about 90% of that. In addition, I must meet weekly with the deacons, trustees, and Board of Christian education chairperson, supervise 20 minister-in-training, and answer numerous letters and telephone calls, while trying to find time to prepare at least one new sermon and three different Bible lessons to be taught here at 12:00 p.m., or 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

Some of you are unhappy with me and want more of my time and attention. When you have to wait two weeks for an appointment you feel that I don't love you or I am too arrogant or filled-with-pride to see you. You don't want to

meet

with

other

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and

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clergy

on

my

staff

for counseling, instruction, and prayer, even when I am physically, emotionally or psychologically used up. I would do more if I were able.

Since I am older now, with a larger church of 2,400 members, I may have to step down and take a much smaller church that will pay me a living salary so you can get a younger, more active and dynamic person who can meet all your needs. When I came 12 years ago I knew all 600 of you individually. Now, I can't know all of you personally, but I do try with an imperfect memory. 41

The Allen Temple congregation responded in the spirit of care by granting the pastor more rest and meditation time.

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<sup>41</sup>June 13, 1982 (Allen Temple Baptist Church Bulletin).

A few months later some of the laypersons began to volunteer their time in serving fellow members who had specific needs and problems. The church procured the ministerial services of Dr. Charles Larkrith, a former pastor in the area, to function as the Executive Assistant to Pastor Smith. In addition, Pastor Smith's salary has increased over the last two years and he has greater freedom to set his schedule in relation to church and community activities. Finally, he has more competent and committed clergy and laypersons working with him.

John A. Sanford, an Episcopal priest and a Jungian therapist, who wrote Ministry Burnout gives some helpful guidelines for the clergy who find themselves in or moving toward Burnout,

- 1) A change of outer activity: reduce the stressful work schedule. Set limits on activities take time for personal fun.
- 2) Creative Relationships: Nourish family and friends relations. Allow yourself to receive energy from others. Also, you give energy and power to others.
- 3) Using the body creatively: exercise-yoga or jogging, bowling, swimming, etc.
- 4) Meditations: spend time with Self and God. To rebuild energy level.
- 5) Dreams: a dream has energy in it, and proper use of dream transfers energy from the uncounscious into consciousness.
- 6) Keeping a Journal. In our journal we write out our problems, what is worrying us, what is getting us down and our darkest, most unthinkable thoughts. Anything of importance to the life of the soul can be written in our journal.

- 7) Paying attention to our fantasies. Fantasies contain certain psychic energy. Allow the Spirit to guide our fantasies in the areas of creativity, restoration and positive and healthy stimulations. 42

In our conclusion, this third chapter attempted to give a holistic approach to Pastoral care in relation to the congregation, pastor, minister and community. The significance of care includes the external service model to others or "outreach" and the internal service model to the pastor and congregation or "inreach". The church is as strong as its pastors and members. The health and well being of a local church must be of utmost concern of the pastor and laity. When there is resentment, hostility, anger, jealousy, on either side, then the body of Christ ultimately suffers and loses its effectiveness in the community.

This leads us to the final chapter in which specific materials will be presented on this topic, and the goal is to blend together the materials of the last three chapters in the final presentation.

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<sup>42</sup>John A. Sanford. Ministry Burnout. (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), p. 106-113.



## CHAPTER 4

THE URBAN BLACK CHURCH'S EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING MODEL  
FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE.

Jesus of Nazareth utters these words,  
 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
 because he hath anointed me to preach  
 the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me  
 to heal the brokenhearted, to preach  
 deliverance to the captives, and re-  
 covering of sight to the blind, to set  
 a liberty them that are bruised, to  
 preach the acceptable year of the  
 Lord. <sup>1</sup>

While I was thinking about an appropriate quotation to employ at the beginning of this chapter, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the above words of Jesus which seemed to capture the meaning of this upcoming discussion. Jesus' prophetic statements focus on his involvement with human life on a deep level. He was telling loved ones, friends and strangers that brokenness, alienation, pain and sadness were prevalent in the human condition, and he was going to involve himself in that context. He did not resort to a safe and tranquil ministry, but rather he voluntarily placed himself on the line for suffering humanity. His words "to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, recovery of sight to the blind and to set at liberty them that are bruised," beautifully connected the virtue of

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 4:18-19.

religion with humankind mental/physical/social states.

This chapter will delve further into the struggles, pains, desires and dreams of black people in a communal setting. The first three chapters have given us a host of perspectives of how black people responded, adjusted, created and overcame various circumstances in American society. Now, it is time to observe specifically the urban Black Church's role in a crucial area of community mental health care. Using the term, Community Mental Health Care does not ignore or swallow up the importance of the individual's quest for personal therapeutic care; the opposite is the case, the use of "community" is designed to include some of the major institutions in the urban context that resemble a collective and unifying force of mental health service, training, education and treatment which would benefit many instead of just a few.

The chapter will be divided in the following manner:

a) The shaping of the concept: community mental health, b) The Urban Black Church's response to community mental health care; and finally c) The Proposed Educational and Training Model. These three sections will give specific insights into the need of black people to creatively improve the quality of life in the community. The African proverb is right, "the individual is the community; the community is the individual." The unity of life is the law of the universe.

#### A. THE SHAPING OF THE CONCEPT: COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE

A concept of this magnitude does not develop out of thin air; especially, when it involves the well being of human beings. Black people have had a long history of living under a dual dilemma. First, they have to justify and defend their rights to possess privileges and advantages of American citizenship, and secondly, they have to constantly teach and guide loved ones to the fact that skin pigmentation does influence behavioral patterns which bring out the worse and best in people. In addition, black people have to deal with the normal life's struggles, difficulties, anxieties and pains which have been intrinsically part of the human experience. It does not matter who one is, how much money one has, no one can escape the umbrella of finitude in this world. Hence, combining the social stigma of Blackness along with the existential realities of existence in accordance to black life, are factors which produced behavioral, emotional and social problems in the community. Keeping this fact in mind, we will examine this part thusly, 1) Some attitudes concerning mental health and 2) Examples of non-professional communal mental health systems.

##### 1. Some Attitudes Concerning Mental Health

An attitude does not suddenly appear on the stage of

human consciousness without some conditional factors involved in the process of development. The same is true on the subject of mental health. The professional person, who daily worked in a mental health service capacity, has established beliefs on the subject through academic training and experimental exposure with "classified" clients and patients in accordance with DSM III (A standard psychiatric/social work text for diagnosing and treating deviant and abnormal behaviors and personalities). Thus society has designated and assigned "specific" human actions as being destructive and unhealthy in relation to normal and healthy responses of the majority in life situations.

Black people are part of the societal understanding of what is mental health and what is mental illness. On the surface the attitudinal issue would seem to be irrelevant. But wait! We are looking at people who have had to deal with and overcome many hardships and obstacles while in this country. Therefore, they have developed certain attitudes about "normality" and "craziness" which are not entirely aligned with DSM III.

The cushion factor of black communal living is definitely presented. Dr. William D. Pierce, a black clinical psychologist, in private practice in San Francisco, bears this out.

It is a common opinion that the black community tolerates or absorbs a greater degree of 'deviant' behavior. Because of the multiple problems that exist

and are perpetuated, the community has adjusted to a certain level of chaotic and socially disruptive behavior. Hence the expectable environment is defined by a greater degree of disruptive activity. Thus behavior that is considered disturb or 'crazy' would have a greater disruptive intensity in order to be received as outside of 'normal' or 'abnormal'. 2

In the above quotation by Dr. Pierce, we see that the Black community has certain build-in absorbing features to assist suffering folks, but when the cushion does not work, then these folks are known through police or psychiatric interventions and their chaotic and disruptive behaviors are diagnosed as being critical to acute in severity. Thus some black people become uneasy and negative about anyone who can not hold "his or her cool", or "flies off the handle." Sometimes, black people who are depressed and highly agitated would go unnoticed until they became violent and unmanageable with loved ones and friends.

Even when mental health services are available, some black people are slow to seek help for themselves or "known" individuals because of the social stigma of being "black and crazy." They would rather act up in a familiar setting in hope of getting it together then being involved with "the man"-the police and placed in a mental health facility that might mistreat them.

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<sup>2</sup>William D. Pierce, "The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Programs and The Black Community," in Reginald L. Jones (ed.) The Black Psychology (New York: Harper & Rows, 1980), p.440.

The power of the media has shaped black attitudes toward mental health. The movie films of Psycho I & II, The Evil That Men Do, Carrie (a young girl who had Satanic powers) are glaring reminders that "losing one's mind" is frightening and unpleasant.

The general lack of knowledgeable information on mental health leaves people to speculate and imagine all such of things about abnormal behaviors. Some of which make them unaware of harmful conditions which existed in loved ones and friends.

And, finally, religion plays a part. The most popular institution in the community is the House of God. On a given major street in a community, the presence of churches is evident. It is not surprising to see three to five churches within a quarter of a mile distance. Needless to say, some people have developed strong feelings concerning the level of "craziness" or "deviant" behavior as being out of touch with God and in touch with Satan. Dr. Pierce states the phrase, "being full of the devil"<sup>3</sup> is a common statement employed by religious black people who discover that an individual is not functioning normally. They also believe that the sick person must pray, fast and get right with God and actively turn from his/her sinful ways. This attitude is alive and well in many black churches.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 441.

However, in most black communities, there are non professional systems which assist people to cope with the pressures of life. Thus, the next part, examples to non professional communal mental health systems, is at hand.

## 2. Examples of Non Professional Communal Mental Health Systems

During slavery, black people had special places where they went to expel their mental anguish. The major place was the church, but there were other places such as the slave quarters, drinking sites where whiskey, rum and beer were popular social items primarily among males, and secret group meetings where cursing out the slavemaster was done and plotting escapes and insurrections were held.

In the current social make up of the community, black people have some non-established religious ways of experiencing communal mental health. Thomas A. Gordon and Norman L. Jones have written a penetrating chapter on "Functions of the Social Newtwork in the Black Community," in the textbook entitled, Mental Health: A Challenge To The Black Community, and they offer some insightful information on the survival settings of black folks:

Black people tend to congregate, not just in churches and clubs, but in lounges and bars, juke-joints and night spots, luncheonettes, playgrounds, parks, street corners and porch stoops, merely to experience the presence of other people who look and feel the way they do. Thousands of such places flourish throughout the country because they provide invaluable connections

and gratification for people who pass through them. They are critical to the survival patterns-and hence the health and mental health-of Black people. 4

These systems are crucial in gasping the ways in which black people express communal mental health. Each mentioned location offers black people an opportunity to be in fellowship and express deep feelings. Two other places are important: The barbershop and beauty shop where black people can relax, feel comfortable and share feelings about various subjects. Gordon and Jones also stated that "the corner, like the taverns, liquor stores, pool halls, and playgrounds, bolster the individual's social connection and fulfills critical survival needs." 5

Finally, the social network of Drugs is an unfortunate occurrence in the community, but, yet some black people are able to experience a sense of somebodiness and power by selling or purchasing the various illegal drugs. The presence of "Drug euphoria" is seen in two ways: First the supplier who receives gratification from the profit end and second, the buyer who receives superficial stimulation and excitement in the actual consumption.<sup>6</sup> Some black people use drugs as a way of coping with the pressures of home life,

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas A. Gordon and Norman L. Jones "Functions of the Social Network in the Black Community" in Lawrence E. Gray (ed.) Mental Health: A Challenge To The Black Community (Philadelphia: Dorrance, 1978), p. 188.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 190.



the job setting and institutionalized racism; others use drugs to feel important, useful and powerful in relation to themselves, friends and strangers; others use drugs to hide personal inadequacies, fears and doubts; and some use drugs to act out viciously and violently in the community.

Thus, we have an understanding of what are the attitudes and conditions which have shaped the concept of community mental health. This concept is not some intellectual expression, but rather it depicts how black people experience different forms of mental health. This is an appropriate time to move towards the next section which is, the urban Black church's response to community mental health care.

#### B. THE URBAN BLACK CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE

The heart of this study is the creative effort of the black church to care for its people. The use of "urban" in front of black church is to illuminate the fact that the majority of black people reside in the urban situation. The task before us is to examine how effective the urban black church is to the problems which influence mental health. There is no question that the church has responded to the challenge, but can it do more is the primary issue of today.

In the community, people need to know that someone or some institution can relate to their difficulties and

plights. We will discuss this section as follows, 1) The Urban Black Church's involvement in the area of community mental health care and 2) The Inner City Mental Health Training Program for Ministers sponsored by the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. From this format we will have the necessary material to develop the final section on "The Proposed Educational/Training Model for Urban Black Churches."

Recent statistics have shown that the Black family is in trouble. And this is very alarming because in the words of Deotis Roberts, "the future of black people depends on two institutions: The family and The Church."<sup>7</sup> All is not well in many black households in the urban community. Many black teen-agers are increasingly becoming parents before they are ready to assume the responsibility involved in raising children. For the most part, they are still children themselves. The female teenager is basically saddled with the task of bearing and taken care of the new offspring. This is extremely unfortunate because many black female teenagers are not equipped with the social or economic skills to adequately provide the nourishing environment necessary for child raising. Kurt Andersen in his article, "A Threat To The Future," dramatizes the teenager pregnancy

<sup>7</sup>J. Deotis Roberts, Roots of a Black Future: Family and Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), The Basic themes of his book.

problem:

Today a majority (55) of black children are born to unmarried, often teen-age mothers; in 1965 only 26% of non white newborns were illegitimate. Half of all children have no father at home, and the medium income of these single mother households is only \$7,458. The incidence of divorce among black couples is twice that of whites. 8

He went on to illuminate the problem with these words, "poverty accounts for a large part of this rampant family instability: the unemployment rate among black men (16%) is nearly three times as high as among white men, and black family incomes are, on the average 56% of white family incomes. It is hard to keep any family together under such financial pressures."<sup>9</sup> Concurrently, Jill Nelson-Ricks, who wrote a similar type article on "Mothers Struggling Alone," projected that "at the present, at least 42 percent of all Black families are headed by women and if the trend of the last decade continues, the figure may well be in excess of 50 per cent by 1990."<sup>10</sup>

If these dishearting facts were not enough, many urban communities are plagued with youth gangs. The black community has experienced an accelerated form of youth killings and violence which have brought pain, tears and

<sup>8</sup>Kurt Andersen "A Threat To The Future", Time 123:20 (May 14, 1984) 20.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Jill Nelson-Ricks, "Mothers Struggling Alone" Essence 15:1 (May 1984).

anger to many black families. Some black people are experiencing depression, anxiety, fear and psychotic occurrences due to the after math of indiscriminate shooting and killings by youth gangs in the community. For instance, the senseless killings of eight youths and two adults during the weekend of October 12 to 14, 1984, in Los Angeles, generated city-wide community anger and protest. The statistics on youth killings reflected over one hundred in the year 1984. This was so appalling that Mayor Thomas Bradley went public to declare war on youth gangs and refer to the killers as "urban terrorists."<sup>11</sup> Other urban mayors are faced with the youth gang problem.

These examples just stated by no means encompass all of the urban problems. This shows that the black church has an enormous challenge. In Los Angeles, various black clergy groups, associations and organizations are attempted to deal with the social problems facing the black family. The writer feels that one group in particular, known as the Gathering (an ecumenical ministerial group) is an interesting case of involvement by the urban black church structure.

In the early summer of 1979, a significant meeting took place at Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles, where approximately 350 pastors and ministers of various de-

<sup>11</sup> "Terrorism, L. A. Style" Los Angeles Times (November 14, 1984) part 2, p. 4.

nominations and groups came together because of the various problems which beseted the Los Angeles Area, especially the black community. The media (T. V. and radio representatives) were presented at the church. It was not unusual for them to be there, due to the number of people who were represented by the clergy. It was not far off line to estimate that close to five hundred thousand citizens were directly influenced on a given Sunday morning by the clergy. In spite of this group, the actual number of black clergy in the Los Angeles area was around eighteen hundred. Nevertheless, the group did represent some of the city's influential ministers, so that the significance could not be ignored.

From this meeting, they pledged their support to the group's name "Gathering" and purpose (to meet the spiritual, social, economic, political and mental health needs of the community) which enhanced the collective thrust of the church ministry in the community. The following Gathering committees and goals reflected the wide range of community concerns:

- 1) Community Relations Committee: To sponsor community-wide consciousness based upon a working relationship with all community-based organizations which effect the people of Los Angeles. The emphasis on Police brutality, and improving police/community relations.
- 2) Drugs, Alcohol and Health Care Committee: The writer functioned as a consultant and trainer. To study and understand the nature of substance abuse; to work closely with existing community agencies; to develop health care units in local congregations and to identify trends and areas of needs in the community, especially among youth.

- 3) Economic Development Committee: To encourage individual churches to develop credit unions; to develop community wide consumer co-op.
- 4) Family Life Committee: To hold community workshops on family life; to try and discover the relationship between crime and weak families. And to develop models for pre-marital counseling; finally, to work with community agencies interested in strengthening family life.
- 5) Media Committee. To interface with radio and television networks and stations, as well as newspapers and magazines exploring them to be objective, fair, and cooperative in news coverage and editorials about the black community.
- 6) Political Concerns Committee: To maintain proper balance between being politically astute and knowledgeable, while at the same time, upholding a child-like vision of the Godly possibilities for our city and nation. 12

There were three other committees, Housing, Public Education and Spiritual Life and Pastoral Care <sup>13</sup> which give us a broad scope as to the level of concern and service these Black ministers expressed and implemented during the initial years of 1979 to 1982.

I was an active participant in the Gathering structure. I attended some of the meetings and became a member of the Drugs, Alcohol and Health Care Committee. Unfortunately, the flames of excitement and enthusiasm did not lodge very long in some of the clergy's being. Some positive projects were done over the first two years. The Police

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<sup>12</sup>The Gathering Proposed Planning Process, 1981.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

Department tried to work with the clergy in terms of improving better community relations. There were three successful city-wide revivals and celebrations services. The ministers, who had a spirit of social activism, found an organization which was attuned to community enrichment and progress. However, for every positive, there is a negative.

I realized in the meetings after the first year that ministerial classism in that some clergy were jealous of other clergy because of church membership status, personal possessions, and community notoriety and bickering over issues of action, leadership power and money control, began to mar and reduce the overall effectiveness of the group. In addition, only a few ministers were doing the work while the majority sat back to watch, criticize or drift away. Furthermore, my committee on Drugs, Alcohol and Health Care sponsored three workshops on these areas of concern and the general attendance was poor in relation to ministerial participation. Of course, when some of the ministers were questioned about their absence, they made apologies and excuses, but the worthwhile materials and experts who were trainers did not receive the benefit of their presence.

In 1982 the Gathering began to lose its presence in the community. The community problems did not diminish but the Gathering did. Presently, some members are meeting at First A.M.E. Church in Los Angeles, in an effort to generate

interest and enthusiasm once again. Unfortunately, the prognosis of 1985 does not look good for the resurrection of the Gathering, unless some pastors are able to overcome their personal hand ups in the areas of power, leadership, money and media exposure and the young ministers (the age range of 24 to 40) are able to receive "genuine" mutual support and respect from the older ministers. The community mental health problems are still great, youth gang warfare, teenage parenthood, suicide, drug addiction, alcoholism, family violence, divorce, rape, unemployment and poor education-to mention a few. Clearly, the work is there; the question remains can the black clergy express a collective ministerial effort through an organizational structure.

All is not bleak or dark, one of the silver lining experiences that developed during the Gathering's popularity was the involvement of the School of Social Work at U.S.C. in the Area of Inner City Mental Health Training for the ministers, which came into being in 1981.

This Project of the School of Social Work at U.S.C. was a bold and creative venture. Through the effort of Drs. Barbara Solomon and Helen Mendes who were (are) professors at the University's School of Social Work and Mrs. Helen Maxwell, LCSW, Clinical Director of El Nido Counseling Services, this training program was funded by N.I.M.H. (National Institute of Mental Health from 1980 to



1983). During the early stages, Dr. Barbara Solomon did most of the community publicity work for the Project. In the Los Angeles Sentinel, dated December 18, 1980, there was an article entitled, "Churches Set for Counseling," in which Dr. Solomon stressed "the importance of the inner city or urban ministers receiving training and education in the mental health area so that they could better lead emotionally troubled members of their communities to sources of therapy."<sup>14</sup> The minister has always been a significant figure in caring and counseling black people, but the complexity and magnitude of socio/emotional problems are sometimes overwhelming for him/her. Hence a greater level of team work was (is) needed to help the pastors and ministers who regularly counsel individuals.

Referring back to the above article, the following information is expressed

In preliminary work, she spoke with black ministers and collected questionnaires from about 70 who head inner city churches. Many clergy persons who were overwhelmed with the burden of human secular troubles in their congregations and were eager to learn better ways to handle their responsibilities. <sup>15</sup>

This was an extremely important training programs. Some of the Gathering members gave Dr. Solomon and her colleagues their enthusiastic support. She expressed in a question-

<sup>14</sup>"Churches Set For Counseling, "Los Angeles Sentinel 11:30 (December 18, 1980).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

naire: date March 23, 1984 from me some additional insights on the goals of the Training Program.

- 1) To increase inner city ministers' understanding of mental health problems.
- 2) To increase the skill of inner city ministers in connecting persons with mental health problems to appropriate social and mental health resources.

In the two letters (see following Exhibits) she mailed to me, she stated the objectives and plan of the Training Program for the participating ministers. The over-arching objective was to utilize the rich traditional of the urban or inner city black church as a referral institution as well as a nourishing base in the education, treatment and rehabilitation of troubled parishioners and community residents.

The training/service structure was as follows: the classroom training dealt with such topics as psychosomatic disorders, family violence, teenage pregnancy, depression, stress, How to refer, Community Mental Health sources, Prevention and Intervention and Drug addiction, the addictive personality and suicide which were conducted and coordinated by Dr. Helen Mendes. The ministers presented actual case studies for evaluation and Group Discussion, films, film-strips, and guest lecturers. Mrs. Helen Maxwell, co-ordinated the Family-Life Counseling component in which trained social workers functioned as staff personnel from 1981 to the present in the following four churches in Los

# Family Counseling at Inner-City Church Sites

PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR  
Dr. Barbara Solomon, D.S.W.  
School of Social Work  
Phone: 743-2711

COORDINATOR OF  
CLINICAL SERVICES  
Helen Maxwell, L.C.S.W.  
El Nido Services  
Phone: 752-2332

COUNSELING SITES  
Praises of Zion Personal  
Involvement Center  
8222 South San Pedro Street  
Los Angeles, California 90003  
Counselor:  
Gaylynn Thomas, M.S.W.  
Phone: 752-2333

Bethel United Holy Church  
8274 South Central Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90002  
Counselor:  
Ernestine Myers, M.S.W.  
Phone: 582-4216

St. Marks  
United Methodist Church  
8305 South Gramercy Place  
Los Angeles, California 90047  
Counselor:  
Jerome Poland, M.S.W.  
Phone: 753-2112



A JOINT PROJECT OF U.S.C. SCHOOL  
OF SOCIAL WORK AND EL NIDO SERVICES



February 24, 1981

Reverend Anthony Frazier Lloyd  
Sunnyside Baptist Church  
9317 Budlong Street  
Los Angeles, California 90044

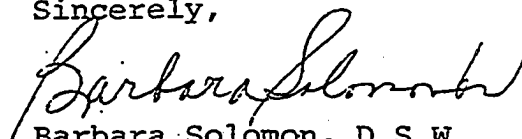
Reverend Lloyd

This letter is in follow-up of our earlier correspondence regarding the Mental Health training program for ministers that has been funded under a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. The grant permits us to offer the course without cost to the participating ministers.

Two training cycles will be completed before June 30, 1981. The first is currently being conducted at First A.M.E. Church on Wednesday afternoons from 12-3 p.m. It has been planned for those ministers who indicated on their questionnaires that they had had no previous educational experiences (workshops, seminars, courses in seminary, etc.) which related to mental health problems. The second cycle for those ministers who have had such educational experiences will begin April 22, 1981, from 12-3 p.m.

If you are still interested in participating in the program, please telephone Ms. Betty Whitaker at 752-2331. You will be placed on the list of ministers to be notified well in advance of the April starting date.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara Solomon, D.S.W.  
Project Administrator

BS:bw

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY PARK  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007

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April 9, 1981

Rev. Anthony F. Lloyd  
Sunnyside Baptist Church  
9317 Budlong Street  
Los Angeles, California 90044

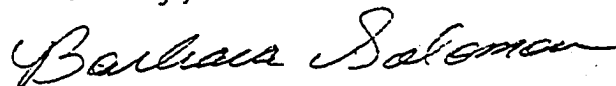
Dear Reverend:

We received your completed questionnaire indicating your interest in our mental health training program for ministers. Because of the overwhelming response, we scheduled two cycles. The first cycle which was designed for ministers who indicated no special training in dealing with the problems of the mentally ill has been completed. The second cycle for more experienced ministers will begin May 6 and terminate July 1. We invite your participation.

The training sessions will be held weekly on Wednesday, 12-3pm at First AME Church, 2270 So. Harvard Blvd. If you are still interested in participating please complete the tear-off attached and return it in the stamped envelope enclosed. There is no cost to participants and a certificate of completion from the university will be awarded to those completing the course.

If you have any questions regarding the project, please telephone me at 743-8296 or Dr. Helen Mendes, Training Coordinator at 743-2711.

Sincerely,



Barbara Solomon, DSW  
Project Administrator

BS/jf

Enclosure

Angeles: Praises of Zion Baptist Church, Bethel United Holy Church, St. Mark United Methodist Church and Trinity Baptist Church. These social workers are counselors in these churches which greatly assist the urban pastors in the area of counseling. This specialized lay counseling staff assist individuals who are experiencing drug abuse problems, family crises, and employment and health issues.

The actual number of clergypersons who went through the program was 50. The vital statistics are: 10 females and 40 males; 17 Baptist; 5 Methodists; 4 Holiness; 2 Church of Christ; 1 Mennonite; 1 Church of Religious Science and 20 non-denominational affiliation.<sup>16</sup> On September 16, 1984, I interviewed Dr. Dumas Harshaw, the assistant Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church who went the second cycle of the Program at the School of Social Work at U.S.C., as to effectiveness of the Program. He stated that "the classroom experience was "therapeutic" for him and other ministers because they could relax and share their fears, anxieties and doubts concerning personal image and the responsibilities of ministry.<sup>17</sup> During the classroom setting the ministers became a community and from this experience a degree of mental health happened in their midst.

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<sup>16</sup>Materials which were from Dr. Barbara Solomon at the School of Social Work at U.S.C. in Los Angeles, the month of January, 1984.

<sup>17</sup>Interview with Dr. Dumas Harshaw on September 13, 1984.

I have also conducted extensive interviews with Barbara Solomon, Helen Mendes and Helen Maxwell in the latter part of 1983 through 1984, and they agreed that the ministers definitely received invaluable training and materials from the program. They did express that some ministers who shared certain biblical teachings had to change in order to creatively fit into a health and service orientation for troubled people to experience help and guidance instead of condemnation and guilt.

Education, Intervention, Counseling and Prevention are functional trade marks for this dynamic project. Although the federal grant ended in 1983, the spirit of the program is alive and well. Mrs. Maxwell and Mrs. Ernestine Myers, LCSW, a clinical case worker for the Bethel United Holy Church, have successfully conducted five Family Life Conferences at Bethel United Holy Church, First United Methodist Church in Compton, California, First A.M.E. Church in Los Angeles, Harvest Tabernacle Baptist Church and Trinity Baptist Church, which concluded on November 29, 1984. These ladies were well received at these locations. They conducted four evening sessions which lasted approximately 2 hours per night, and the topics were stress, self-esteem, experiencing loss and strengthening family ties. The responses from young and old church people to the conference have been insightful and growth producing.

Dr. Solomon submitted a comprehensive report on The

Mental Health Services at Inner-City Churches from 1981 to 1983, to the National Institute of Mental Health which was the primary funding source for the program. In her summary section on the participating ministers' views on the Training Component, the following hypotheses were stated:

- 1) A significantly greater number of assistant ministers are likely to enroll in a mental health training program than senior ministers of large churches.
- 2) Ministers are more likely to reveal difficulties they have experienced with mental health problems when sessions are ecumenical rather than denominational.
- 3) More ministers are likely to participate in a mental health training program when sessions are denominational rather than ecumenical.
- 4) Ministers are more likely to support short-term, intensive training programs than longer-term programs.
- 5) Ministers are more likely to support training programs dealing with a specific topic rather than training programs dealing with a wide range of topics.
- 6) Ministers are more interested in enhancing their own counseling skills than in increasing knowledge of community resources.
- 7) Ministers are more interested in increasing their knowledge of community resources than in increasing their knowledge of specific diagnostic categories (e.g. DSM-III categories).
- 8) Ministers are more likely to participate for the duration of the training program if the content of each training session is self-contained rather than cumulative.
- 9) Ministers are more interested in developing the referral skills of key church members than in developing their own referral skills.

- 10) Human sexuality is the content area producing the most tension between religious and mental health perspectives. <sup>18</sup>

These hypotheses do not necessary speak for all of the ministers in the Los Angeles area. But the findings are significant in regard to planning and implementing similar training models in other urban church situations. This pilot project has proven to be successful in enhancing the counseling and referral skills of inner city ministers.

Furthermore, Dr. Solomon's report documented the numerical ratio of individuals who sought counseling assistance at the four churches which were staffed by full-time clinical social workers. The breakdown of the referrals was thusly: 258 (January to December 1981); 342 (January to December 1982); and 175 (January to June 1983), which came to 775 persons <sup>19</sup> who received guidance, direction and treatment from mental health professionals and ministers. These numbers indicated that the training and counseling components reached a substantial number of church members and community residents who ordinarily would not have been serviced. Dr. Solomon concluded by saying that the training model's main premise was, "to empower the in-

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<sup>18</sup> Barbara B. Solomon, "Mental Health Services at Inner-City Churches," Social Work Research Center School of Social Work, University of Southern California, January 1984, p. 35-56.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 43-45.



dividuals and families to affect positive changes in their lives was an universal goal regardless of the specific presenting problem." <sup>20</sup>

Future Family Life Conferences are scheduled for 1985 because of the increased demand by urban black pastors who see the need of this experience in their churches. On this note, we now venture into the final section of this study "The Proposed Educational/Training model for urban Black Churches." This section will be different in that a semi outline type of presentation will be shared and attached exhibits of Black church projects and programs will succinctly speak to the model.

#### C. THE PROPOSED EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING MODEL

In the development of an Educational/Training Model, it is essential that examples of previous undertakings are noted. This chapter has already cited some crucial impressions of community mental health care. The last being the Inner City Mental Training for ministers sponsored by the School of Social Work at U.S.C., gives us a valuable theoretical/pragmatic approach of a model. The reality of the Gathering and other ministerial groups show the need of the clergy to move forward into a community oriented context.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

The Black community is open to an educational mental health program. While I was director of Volunteer Services at Central City Community Mental Health Center, I planned, developed and implemented on February 19, 1981, a two hour seminar on "The Difference Between Mental Health and Mental Illness from a minority Perspective." The trainers were myself, Mr. S. A. Hutchins, LCSW, head of Children In-Patient Service Department at Central City Community Mental Health Center and Dr. George Mallory, M. D., a psychiatrist at King/Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles. I focused on the religion role of mental health; Mr. Hutchins focused on the psychiatric Social Work Role of Mental Health and Dr. Mallory focused on a psychiatric interpretation of mental health issues.

The seminary attracted fifty individuals who represented the community, churches, universities, colleges and other mental health agencies. A questionnaire was given out and all participants responded. On the question of interest, no one gave a negative remark. On the question of Follow-up on the theme, a percent of 95% was recorded on an approving vote. Finally, on the question of "what areas would you like to see at the next seminar? Some of the responses were: 1) How to motivate and stimulate young blacks to rise above their environmental level; 2) more family involvement in mental health; 3) The subject of

racism, 4) adolescent development, 5) mental health of the aged, 6) the care of mental illness, 7) the role of Sexuality/sex stereotypes; 8) The positive aspects of mental health intervention prior to crisis and overcome the notion of "craziness" and 9) the role of education.

This seminar in 1981 was extremely informative and valuable in shaping my perception of mental health education. A lot of ground in the black church and the ministry has been covered. Various aspects of the church and clergy have been revealed and discussed. There is one crucial area which has not been discussed, the structures of urban ministry. Dr. James Shopshire in his article, "The Church and Questions of Ministry in the Urban Environment," shares the three major structures of Urban Ministry:

- 1) The first structural configuration is that of the local church as base for urban ministry. This is by far the most commonly observed structure from which outreach ministry to urban areas is attempted.
- 2) The second structural model is that partnership between the local church and independent ministry groups or community-based organizations.
- 3) The third structural model is one in which the local church congregations fosters, develops and supports independent community-based organizations and ministry groups. This happens only when a local church is clear about its own identity and mission. 21

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<sup>21</sup>James Shopshire, "The Church and Questions of Ministry in the Urban Environment" A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review 94:1 (April 1984), 7-8.

These three structures are prevalent in the black church context. Even when the pastor is highly motivated to venture into social outreach activities, he/she is faced with certain frustrations in relation to limitations or weaknesses. James Shopshire states the primary ones.

- 1) Despite a solid grounding in the faith perspective and well-focused visioning of the community problems, the local church on its own can be impotent to engage even a limited element of the urban context and infuse it with a different kind of transformation power. Churches, thusly, are prone to spend inordinate amounts of time protecting their turf or keeping their world view pure from the perceived threats of secularism, humanism and change.
- 2) Still another limitation or frustration are the traditional expectations of the church: If the membership, finances or the "apportionments" are lagging, the question of new approaches and forms of ministry is not the first to be asked. Rather, the viability of the congregation is questioned and preparation for a post mortem are set into motion. 22

For the urban pastor and his/her church to overcome such frustrations or limitations, they will have to realize that community is not an alien place or planet. The people in the neighborhoods are made in the Divine image and their struggles and pains are mutually theirs.

The victims of mental health problems need to experience a church community which is genuinely concerned about their welfare, health and growth. The Christians who take the "Good Samaritan Mentality" (Luke 10:25-37) and the

"Burden Bearing" seriously (Galatians 6:1-10) will be instrumental in assisting victims (within and without the congregational structure) on the road of recovery. The Christians, who are committed to this great challenge, will discover new meaning to the following church song: "A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, who gave His son my soul to save and it it for the sky, to serve the present age, a calling to fulfill."

Thusly, the model could include the valuable theoretical and training format of the U.S.C. School of Social Work Project. Plus, a cooperative movement of churches to build an independent funding source so that the education and training in mental health will not be restricted to governmental supports. Pastors and their memberships will have to take on the "responsibility" for their own "equipping" or tooling ministry. In other words, a popular phrase, "putting your money or stewardship, where your mouth is," is needed today.

The urban black churches can also select laypersons who will make up "specialized resource teams" which will offer valuable services to the troubled individuals in the religious and secular communities. In addition, local black pastors or associate ministers can, after completing mental health training in a continuing education setting, work with mental health service agencies as professional consultants

or staff persons <sup>23</sup> to assist in the referral, treatment, education and rehabilitation of clients, patients and their families.

Finally, the model is molded to include the creativity and programatic innovation of the four following exhibits. Each black church has to search its spirit and come to grasp with the pressing realities which effect the whole Family of God.

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<sup>23</sup>Vergel L. Lattimore, "Structures for Healing: Establishing an Outpatient Community Mental Health Center in a Minority Community," A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review 95:1 (April 1983) p. 22-25.

Place  
Stamp  
Here

Rev. Robert E. Pipes  
Executive Director  
Black Churchmen's Ecumenical Institute  
Program on the Prevention & Control of Alcohol Abuse  
1101 17th Street, N.W. Suite 304  
Washington, D.C. 20036

#### Accreditation

This program is being evaluated by the American Council of Education for academic credit of non-collegiate courses to colleges and universities across the nation. Approval is anticipated by the end of June 1976.

The BCEI is also affiliated with the George Washington University through the College of General Studies.

#### Evaluation

Our evaluation methodology in determining the extent of success with the program will be an ongoing research-oriented process.

#### How To Register

Persons seeking additional information about the program or wishing to participate should fill out the attached part of the form and mail it in.

We welcome the nomination of a member of your ministry to join our institute. If you cannot participate in the program, a representative can attend in your place. Please fill in the name and address of a nominee in the attached part of the form and mail it to us.

EXHIBIT C

**BLACK**

**CHURCHMEN'S**

**ECUMENICAL**

**INSTITUTE**

### PROGRAM ON PREVENTION OF ALCOHOL ABUSE FOR MINISTERS

1101 17th Street, N.W.  
Suite 304  
Washington, D.C. 20036



The Black church is potentially the most influential institution in Black communities. Its ministers and leaders shape public opinion and have a significant impact on what their parishioners believe and how they experience life. Thus, the most effective way to awaken Black people to the massive problems of alcohol abuse is through their ministers.

#### THE PROBLEM

Alcohol is the most widely abused drug in America today. Nearly one hundred million Americans above the age of 15 use it to some degree and although there are an estimated nine million persons who are already sick with alcoholism, there is a far greater number of alcohol abusers.

#### ALCOHOL ABUSE IS A NATIONAL CRISIS

##### —Purpose

The Black Churchmen's Ecumenical Institute has been awarded a grant from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to develop a national model, which could be implemented throughout the United States, to prepare ministers and deacons who serve Black congregations and Black communities to combat the widespread misuse of alcoholic beverages which has alarmed the nation and resulted in increasing rates of homicide, suicide, traffic fatalities, robberies, rapes, broken homes, unemployment, industrial accidents and loss of profits because of low production in industry.

##### —Goals

Specifically, the goals of this program are:  
(1) to teach ministers how to develop and

implement alcohol abuse programs on education/prevention and control through Black church congregations.

- (2) To develop skills, techniques and methodologies essential to detecting and aiding persons suffering from the problems associated with alcoholism.
- (3) To facilitate a deeper understanding of alcoholism as a disease and its human behavioral characteristics.
- (4) To expose ministers to group counseling techniques which are utilized as a basis for developing the necessary expertise to guide family units through periods of crisis in the home and through the adjustment and recovery periods.

#### —Program Requirements

Participants in the program go through a three phase, year and one-half educational experience. Each phase is twelve weeks long. Participants are required to attend classes one evening per week where they learn, from the staff of BCEI and experts in the field, about the problems of alcohol abuse, and also engage in seminars and workshops. Each phase of the program also requires a practicum where the participants learn by active interaction with staff officials and some patients at selected alcohol treatment centers. During the final phase of the program, participants will develop and conduct their own prevention/control program at the church where they serve or another agreed upon location.

PERSONS COMPLETING THE COURSE  
RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTER.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PASTOR ☐

ASSOCIATE PASTOR ☐

ASST. MINISTER ☐

☐ I wish to participate; please enroll me.

DEACON ☐

☐ Send information only.

OTHER ☐

Pastor's recommendation of a member to represent him or her

Name of Nominee \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_



## COUNSELING STAFF

Hourace Austin  
Georgye Grigette  
Kathryn Bronson  
Dr. Addie Brown  
Dorothy Casson  
Vermell Drayton  
Larry Edmond

Mariam Fergerson  
Dwight Glover  
Donald Hart  
Myrtle Moore  
Carl Roberts  
Shirley Walker

Peggy Collins, RN, Nurse Consultant

Johnny Carter, Attorney, Client Legal Consultant

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

James Blackwell  
Louis Collins  
Margurite Hodge  
Samuel Mindingall  
Yolanda Moore

Frances McCarthy  
Edwin Stanfield  
Inez Taylor  
David Wells  
Etta Williams

## AUXILLARY COMMITTEE

Evelyn Alexander  
Louvenia Austin  
Tommie Austin  
James Baker  
Kathy Blackwell  
Lathrudis Chandler

Clotel Giles  
John Jett  
Eula Nickerson  
Victoria Osai  
Shirley Washington

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Horace Austin, Director

Frances McCarthy Administrator/Treasurer

EXHIBIT D



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2230 West Jefferson Blvd.  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90018  
Telephone 7349395

DR. JAMES EDWARD JONES,  
Pastor

## WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY COUNSELING SERVICE

" Together We Can "

(History)

The Westminster Community Counseling Service was opened in May, 1982.

It was the "brainchild" of Dr. James Jones, pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, and himself a counselor. He recognized that the congregation of the church included the qualified personnel, resources and facilities to establish and operate a high quality counseling service. It was envisioned as a missionary effort for the church to reach out to the troubled and distressed in the community.

A proposal to organize a counseling service was designed and submitted by Horace Austin, LCSW, a Mental Health Counselor and Consultant. The proposal was approved by the Session, the governing body of the church. Thereafter an ad hoc committee headed by Mr. Austin, and including Ms. Francis McCarthy and Ms. Cleste Bembry established the nucleus that began the initial planning phase. This task force later became a permanent advisory committee consisting of members of Westminster with a special interest and expertise in the delivery of human services.

The Men's Council accepted the responsibility of sponsoring the counseling service and provided the primary source of financial support to the program during the first year of operation. Additional funds have been provided by generous donors from Westminster, Self Development of People Committee of the Presbytery of the Pacific, and Kaiser Permanente Health Foundation.

A volunteer "work force" of church members and friends from the community worked diligently for fourteen Saturdays

renovating the east wing of the basement of the church to house the counseling service.

A number of donors from Westminster provided furnishings, supplies and equipment for nine counseling offices, a waiting room and a nursery. Additionally, food, clothing and transportation, as well as ongoing volunteer services, have been provided to the program by members of the church and friends.

A clothes closet and an emergency food bank have been set up to provide services to those who need them.

The Advisory Committee of the counseling service is an enthusiastic and productive body.

The counseling service has an Auxillary Committee consisting of both members and friends of Westminster. It provides a number of invaluable support services including coordination and supervision of the clothes closet, food bank, and child care services while the parents are in counseling session; and receptionist services.

Five experienced counselors who volunteered their services, were on staff along with administrative persons and a support team when the center opened. The counseling staff has doubled during the last two years.

The center does active out-reach into the community. It has liasons with schools, social, mental and physical health agencies, the court system, churches and other referral sources in the community.

The program has expansion plans for which outside funding is needed. It's goal remains that of providing professional and prompt counseling and human services to troubled persons and families in the community.

Ministry Of The Laity At  
Allen Temple Baptist Church

A small group of lay leaders sat in the pastor's study recently, informally exchanging ideas about an upcoming event. This is not unusual at Allen Temple; but, rather, is quite commonplace as a part of the planning process.

The atmosphere in the room became electrifying--with the exchange of thoughts and ideas flashing--and almost as if the Holy Ghost was in the midst of the gathering. Pastor Smith, in a high-spirited voice, said, "The secret of Allen Temple is that we have a church that cares for God's community and the world! We are a people, not introvertish! We care and wish to touch the lives of people not only in Oakland but all over the world. Yes! We want to get to Heaven; but we want God's people to have a good life here on earth! We have a cross-section of people--free to use whatever talents and skills they have to His glory and honor!" The evening ended with a lay person saying, enthusiastically, "I want to pray!" This is the motivation that calls to the "Ministry of the Laity" at Allen Temple.

This feeling is not "owned" by Pastor Smith alone. Lister to what some others have to say. A clinical psychologist, member of Allen Temple, when asked what motivated her, said, "God has been so good to me! I want to give back to God some of my time and energy! I want to use that which He has given me to His glory and honor!" Lay leader, Doctor Janet Marshburn, teaches a class of deacons and deaconesses on working with the sick and bereaved. A police sergeant, Joseph Samuels, volunteered to head the Long Range Planning Committee for the church and expressed his motivation as "an opportunity to use those leadership skills that I use every day in my profession to do a greater job in God's work." A health educator provides health education programs and services. Business and professional women come together to finance education for the youth of the church. Engineers provide a tutorial program for potential engineers and scientists.

My call to serve the laity is like fire burning in my bones, like a swirling of my blood that propels me into action! As a school administrator, I see the school as

a mission field and a ministry for me!

Ideas for new ministries of the laity are welcomed and channeled into appropriate avenues for development. Members are encouraged to dream! dream! dream!! It's safe to offer new ideas! Pastor Smith, through his teaching, preaching and example, models that God's work is not confined to the temple, but, rather that Jesus went into the byways and hedges--where people were--not where they came to.

I think it is of particular interest, however, to note that the "ministry of the laity" is not new to the Black church. There is a deep calling that had its beginning back in the days of slavery.

Over the years, the Black church has become the single "body of mercy" that has remained sensitive to its people's cry, while remaining strong and constant in the lives of the Black family. In the days of slavery, nurse Harriet Tubman set up the "Underground Railroad." Sojourner Truth--fighter for women's rights. Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Bethune-Cookman College. Whitney Young...Benjamin Hooks...the litany of the laity goes on. The laity leadership is a survival strategy that has withstood the test of time and grown with intensity for a whole people. We have trusted others to be sensitive to our needs, to take care of us but, often they have failed. Yet, our church laity continues to show us the way, as a people.

It is necessary that we hold hands with people of all colors; but, while doing so, do some things for ourselves. We have been taught, while in the laps of our ancestors, to "do something for ourselves!" As we have become more intellectually and economically affluent, we are able to release our self-caring grip and reach out in a more supportive way to address the needs of others.

As a laity, we feel that we, too, have been called to serve! We have a deep sense of mission! It is a vocation of Christian service and proclaiming the Gospel through our stewardship of time, talents, gifts, personal and social witnessing.

Submitted By: Regina Anderson 5-27-84

Rev. Ralph Williams, Pastor  
Church: (213) 234-3436

Rev. Dr. Odis T. Ireland, Ph. D.D.D.  
Coordinator and Counselor  
Phone (213) 567-9252

Mrs. Satira Naomi Blackwood,  
Herbal Practitioner and Counselor  
P.O. Box 59331 - Los Angeles, CA 90059  
Tel. (213) 295-8883

# ZION TEMPLE COMMUNITY CHURCH – TRUTH SEEKERS

## PRESENTS HOLISTIC HEALING SERVICES

Beginning Saturday, January 12, 1980 – 12:00 Noon to 1:30 P.M. These services will continue each 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month throughout the entire year of 1980.

## SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED

NATURAL HEALING  
NUTRITION APPLIED PERSONALLY  
HERBS AND VITAMINS  
WHOLISTIC LIVING  
UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY  
FREE BLOOD PRESSURE TEST  
BIBLE STUDY AND PRAYER THERAPY  
ACUPUNCTURE  
SHIATZU – ACUPRESSURE  
FAITH HEALING AND THEOLOGY

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
PASTORAL COUNSELING ON:  
ALCOHOL & ALCOHOLISM  
FAMILY COUNSELING  
DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE  
COUNSELING JUVENILES  
SEXUAL PROBLEMS  
COUNSELING BY APPOINTMENT

A SPECIALIST IN EACH OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED FIELDS WILL PRESENT  
THE LECTURE USING HIS/HER OWN EXPERTISE.

NON-DENOMINATIONAL  
1315 East Vernon Avenue  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90011

Speaker's to be announced Dr. Odis Ireland

Place ABove Date & Time 3-8-80-12 noon

COME BRING A FRIEND

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